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OLD MARGARET
AND OTHER STORIES

THE WORKS OF
HENRY KINGSLEY.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF GEOFFREY HAMLYN.
RAVENSHOE.

THE HILLYARS AND THE BURTONS.
SILCOTE OF SILCOTES.

STRETTON.

AUSTIN ELLIOT *and* THE HARVEYS.

MADemoisELLE MATHILDE.

OLD MARGARET, *and* OTHER STORIES.

VALENTIN, *and* NUMBER SEVENTEEN.

OAKSHOTT CASTLE *and* THE GRANGE GARDEN.

REGINALD HETHEREGE *and* LEIGHTON COURT.

THE BOY IN GREY, *and* OTHER STORIES.





THE DEATH OF LEON.
Drawn by Robert Sauber.

Old Margaret.]

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OLD MARGARET

AND OTHER STORIES

BY

HENRY KINGSLEY

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WITH A FRONTISPIECE BY ROBERT SAUBER

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OLD MARGARET.



OLD MARGARET.

CHAPTER I.

AT five-and-forty, Van Kenning was a confirmed old bachelor. Wildways said that in fourteen or fifteen years he might marry his housekeeper and settle in life ; but this was only looked on as a joke, even by the Duke himself.

"Van Kenning is not such an ass," the Duke said. "He comes of a long-lived stock, and a money-getting stock, and a money-holding stock. He will never let a woman have the dipping of her hand into *his* pocket."

"Yet he is fond of a pretty face," said a smirking boy nobleman.

"Then he had better get your portrait painted by one of his friends, the artists," replied the Duke, "and get it done before you have spoilt it by fast living. I tell you that Van Kenning is a confirmed old bachelor, and that in twenty years you will look older than he does now, puppy."

The rest of the gentlemen present were seized with a somewhat troublesome cough. The Duke had evidently got out of bed the wrong side that morning.

"Van Kenning is worth half the grinning gabies in the kingdom," the Duke went on. "He is a wise man : he loves his friends, his pictures, his dinner, and the bow-window of his club. He is a happy old bachelor. I wish to heaven *I* were ; but that is past praying for."

It was so painfully true, that the French Ambassador, who happened to be present, showed the tact of his nation by saying that if this weather lasted, the hay would be got in nicely.

"You should know," said the Duke ; "your people generally make hay while the sun shines. Will you dine down the river with me to-day, Count, and we will talk that matter over again ; and I will catch Van Kenning. His views are very much fixed ;

he is a staunch freetrader, and knows more about wool than all the council together."

"He is strong for the trades unions, though," said the Frenchman. "Let us have him, however."

Meanwhile, the unconscious Van Kenning had finished his breakfast, and was preparing to spend his day. When he had shut his street door behind him, and stood in the bright June sunlight, looking up and down the street, he was the best dressed buck in the West-end of the town that day, the dandy Duke not excepted; and he knew it. Was any one looking at him? Not a creature but the policeman; and so he stepped off down the street towards his club, to hear the news.

There was nobody there but old Piffer, whom he hated. And old Piffer said that a glass of Schiedam gin with a small spoonful of honey in it was an excellent thing for the wind, and that he had just been having some of it himself. Van Kenning left the nasty old fellow in the bay-window, and struck resolutely eastwards towards the trading and manufacturing parts of the town.

Manufactories, which have now been moved nearer to the coal measures, were abundant then, supporting a vast population in streets now let for mere dwelling-houses. No power was in action then in the city excepting hand-power; steam was not yet utilised, and in so level a country so near the sea, no generation of power was possible by gravitation; that is to say, there was no available water-power. The "hands" had it pretty much their own way, and they knew it, as did their masters also.

The trades unions of those times were little more than guilds, kept together mainly on sentimental grounds. There was indeed little necessity for any combination of labour against capital. The mechanics were in most respects the most powerful and difficult body in the State. *Divide et impera* was the only way of managing them at all. It is actually true that violent and fatal riots were common between different trades unions, but on the least symptom of oppression by the aristocracy they were united and dangerous at once. They were united and dangerous now.

A girl of their order had disappeared. She was not very beautiful, and by no means of good character, being in fact a general favourite among the young men, more for her wit and sprightliness than for her discretion. No man would have thought of marrying her, but she had disappeared, and more than one lord was suspected, and so they were determined to make an Appius and Virginia case of it.

Certain rumours of this kind had reached good Van Kenning that morning, and he determined to go and hear what was the

matter. For Van Kenning stood in rather a curious position. He was one of the richest men in the State, and his money had been made by trade; yet having realised and retired, he was no longer a representative of the masters, and his knowledge of their ways and habits caused him to be a kind of ambassador between masters and men, exciting no jealousy from either party.

More than once, on occasions similar to the present, had he assisted at keeping the peace; more than once had he been compelled to depart, muttering, "Confound you, fight it out then!" On this occasion, he knew little or nothing of the matter, but he very soon discovered that something was wrong.

He was in a broad and nearly empty street when the boom of a large bell struck on his ear; he pulled out his watch, looked at it, and fled with two or three others into an archway. It was noon.

Like the green sea-water through the sluices, when the Dutch have flooded the Polders and the Spaniard stands impotently cursing on the dyke, came the swarm of workmen down the street, recruited at each large house by a fresh stream. They were only going to their dinners, but the experienced eye of Van Kenning saw at once that there was something very wrong.

The men were boisterous without being merry, laughing, and yet savage. There was a dim, dull anger in their noise at this noontide which he well knew would break into wild fury when night and leisure came as handmaidens, to see sedition to her red couch. There was something evidently worse amiss than he had guessed of at first. A lean little old Alderman, who had taken shelter with him, seemed to be the most likely person to inquire of. He asked him what was the matter.

The Alderman was very lean and very slow of speech. He said—

"Van Dysart has carried off Martina, and I wish him joy of his bargain. We shall all be murdered in our beds."

"Do you mean that they accuse him of that?"

"They will when they have cut his throat, and burnt the West-end," said the Alderman.

"I suppose that I had better put a stop to it, then," said Van Kenning, taking out his watch.

"Don't put yourself out of the way on my account," said the Alderman. "Still, if you could manage to keep your friends' claws off some of our throats for a year or two I should be obliged."

"The devil shall have the first turn at me, on my honour," said Van Kenning, laughing. "Go to the Club and wait there; I will go and stop it at once. The rascals must be mad."

The street was empty enough now. The old Alderman saw Dandy Van Kenning turn down one of the worst lanes in the neighbourhood and disappear.

This was ten minutes after twelve. When the men returned to the workshops at one, they paused to read this notice posted at the entrance of each factory :—

“ We have been in error, and no wrong has been done. Heads of Sections desiring further information are requested to apply to the Divisional Secretary.”

One or two did so. The answer was easily given.

“ The girl has become tired of her life, and has gone to religion. She is under the protection of Miss Margaret Van Eyck.”

“ Your authority is good ? ”

“ Van Kenning.”

So instead of being a night of riot it was a night of beer, skittles and flirtation after all.

CHAPTER II.

BUT we have not got through Van Kenning's day yet.

He walked thoughtfully through the streets until he came to a certain sundial in a certain square belonging to an Inn of Court, at which he was accustomed to set his watch. (Dent, Arnold, or Frodsham were not in business yet.) And while he was doing so, a footman in the royal livery stepped up to him, and bowing, gave him a letter.

It was the invitation from his Majesty to dine down the river with the French Ambassador. He folded it again, and, followed by the footman, went straight to his Club, and taking pen and ink wrote across the King's letter in *French* :—

Kf Of Wfvg gbt Cvshvoez.

But thinking of the old dodge of discovering cyphers by the recurrence of the letter E and A he made it more difficult.

Lg, Pg, xgwz, Rcu, and more in the same cypher, the only undiscoverable one ever invented. The King read it, and said, “ Hang him, he won't come.”

What Van Kenning had written in French was this :—“ *I do not want Burgundy,*” and he had gone on, “ *I shall stick to Schiedam. Tell Champagne not to be seen speaking to me. I*

have stopped a riot for you of which you knew nothing and I but little. I enjoy life, and therefore cannot afford to be seen speaking to you.

"As for the money you want, I have paid it to Margaret. She will give it you. Do not attempt to leave any security with her or with me. Your handwriting would hang us both.

"Is the sheep-dog a wolf? Sometimes I think that it would be better to sink this land under the sea for a day; but then we should drown Margaret, you say. Well, I will not dine with you."

After despatching this insolently seditious letter to his Sovereign, Van Kenning felt that he must do something respectable. And he was singularly befriended by his good or evil genius. For looking out of the club bow-window, whom should he see but the Archbishop, with a book under his arm, walking down the sunny side of the street, and looking into the shop windows.

He descended swiftly, and put his arm into the Archbishop's. The Archbishop turned his highly noble kindly face towards him, and said—

"I was looking for you."

"And I was looking for you," said Van Kenning.

"What did you want with me?" said the Archbishop.

"I wanted to be seen walking with some one respectable," said Van Kenning.

"Not easy just now. It will cost you money. It is an expensive luxury. You must pay for it."

"How much?"

"Forty pounds."

"I will give you all I have, as you know, but this is so strange. You have never asked before."

"My dear man, I have actually no money left. Never you mind what I have done with my money——"

"As I know, I will not ask," said Van Kenning.

"Well," said the Archbishop, "here is the state of the case. A woman of very bad character has repented of her sins, and being pursued by the bailiffs, requires forty pounds. She has fled for refuge to Margaret, who, of course, declares that her story holds good, and either they must pay the money to-day, or I must, or *you* must. *You* had much better do it."

"Dear me," said Van Kenning, "I paid that money last night. Margaret had it."

"The more foolish you," said the Archbishop.

"You asked me to pay it yourself just now," said Van Kenning, very naturally.

"To screen Margaret; yes. It is a case of casuistry. Answer me: Can a clock be right if the hands are wrong?"

"No."

"Yes. Margaret is right in what she has done; yet she is utterly wrong. As priest I could not warn her; as man of the world you might have done so. My curate tells me that there was to have been a riot about this woman, but that you stopped it. I almost wish that you had not."

"Is the woman so utterly worthless then?" asked Van Kenning.

"When you and I are in our graves, she will be working mischief and evil," said the Archbishop.

"Yet they say that she is kindly, good-humoured, charitable; and she is certainly popular."

"She is a devil," said the Archbishop. "She is the last flame which came from Gomorrah before the Dead Sea closed over it."

"Yet you have been so gentle and so good with these women."

"Not with such as this. She is the first I have seen."

"Then why, Archbishop, do you allow her to go into Margaret and Hubert's house?"

"Because I can lay my hand on her—because I can tame her by what your friends call superstition."

"Hush! some one will hear you."

"What do I care? Let the civil authorities tame their fiends by solitary confinement, and leave us to tame our devils in *our* way. I want to mew this woman up."

"But, my dear Pri—— I mean Archbishop, are you quite sure that you *understand* women?"

The Archbishop looked down on him with something like contempt.

"I always understood that the accusation which your school brought against us was, that we understood your women better than you did yourselves. I thought that had been always understood. Certainly I see twenty women at church for one man. I always thought that the arrangement between the priest and the woman was an accepted thing. I, who am Archbishop, thought I had seen through the women, and was in hopes that I might get at the men. But when a man of the world like yourself tells me that I cannot even understand a woman, I of course give up."

"Do not be angry, dear Archbishop," said Van Kenning. "Come, earn the forty pounds, and let us walk and see Margaret."

"Let us go. She is worth us all."

"One word more, Archbishop. Is this woman really dangerous."

"Not to us. She is cowardly and superstitious. She is no Jezebel or even Cleopatra. To you she is very dangerous. If you knew what was best for you, you Radicals, you would leave her to our tender mercies."

"But you priests cannot be trusted," said Van Kenning.

"Oh yes we can, if you treat us fairly," said the Archbishop. "We shall win in the long run if you force our hand; we have the women, and the women have you."

"And I could have every church in this town sacked, and every priest hung to-morrow," said Van Kenning, quietly.

"That is quite true," said the Archbishop. "And what a nice life your women would lead you afterwards. There is a woman at the bottom of everything. For you have the thirty thousand Ursulas—I mean Ursula and the thirty thousand virgins—there is a woman in the matter here. Look at this!"

They were opposite one of those nondescript places which might be seen in nearly all towns until the last twenty years. In Paris represented by a flash *café*, in London by a public-house generally kept by a prize-fighter. They have disappeared, or are disappearing, even in Australia and Washoe; but this was one.

There was a furious riot of some sort inside; and even while they were asking a policeman the meaning of it, the riot overflowed the door, and the rioters came pouring out before the Alderman and the Archbishop. The two stepped back against the wall, with the policeman, and looked on a sight seldom seen now, but not uncommon then.

"There will be a fight," said the Archbishop.

That was soon evident. The confusion of rioters begun from the very first to show a tendency to make a circle; that circle grew more defined each moment, and on the utterance of a few sharp and terrible words (not producible here), formed itself perfect, in the dead silence of expectation, with two men opposite to one another in the centre.

The man who happened to be facing the Alderman and the Archbishop was well known to both of them: a nobleman, on whose person and face were written three centuries of careful breeding and irresponsible ferocity; a great man, with the strength of an elephant, and the brain and lissomeness of the tiger; a man bred as carefully as a race-horse, and with about as much education. The last and nearly the most terrible form of this man which we have produced in England, was killed in

about his twentieth duel thirty years ago come——. We will call this man Van Dysart.

The man whose back was towards them was evidently more slender and younger; in the *mêlée* inside he had got uncovered, while Van Dysart had his hat on, pressed over his forehead. When the Archbishop got a good sight of this bareheaded young man he tried to force his way through the crowd to get at him. Van Kenning tried also, but said to the policeman, "There will be blood."

"Death," said the policeman.

But all the archbishops, policemen, and aldermen in the world would not have been permitted to interfere between the people and their spectacle—that of two of the governing orders at one another's throat. A well brutalised population loves a fight and hates to see it stopped. There are cases in point: such as that of the fate of the young monk of whom you may read in your Gibbon, during the decadence of the Romans: the fate of any one who would interfere at a bull-fight in Spain, in the present decadence of that country: a solitary policeman at an old English prize-fight—all these cases prove that a brutalised people will have no one standing between themselves and their sport.

The Archbishop might have got through and have rendered my pen dumb on the subject, but he was told to stand back. Seeing that he could do no good he stood still, and prayed rapidly and silently, in his great haste, a very singular prayer. He prayed that the bareheaded young man with his back towards him might kill Van Dysart. And all this had taken place in about two minutes and a half.

"My Lord," said the Archbishop's young gentleman, "I have nothing to add to what I said before, when we were separated in the common hell and brothel, into which I only entered because it was the most evil and worst reputed hole in the town, and that therefore I was certain of finding your lordship there. You are a false liar and a false hound. When you say that I blackened your name in a certain quarter you lie. It needed no blackening. When you say that I avoided encountering you, you lie again."

"Anything more?" said Van Dysart.

"No. Women scold."

"Then, as you have to die, you had better die decently. You have the sun full in your face; and you have lost your hat. Shift round and get the half sun, and we will both fight bareheaded. There goes *my* hat."

It was past any one's mending now. There was a sharp click and a sliding sound, snake-like and devilish, and the naked steel,

mother of blood, was out, and must be wiped clean before it went back to the scabbard.

They stood before one another for nearly a minute, with the points of their swords down, tapping the ground in front of their feet, looking one another steadily in the eyes. At last Van Dysart said to the dead silence around, "The embrogiato is to come from me, then?"

He put his sword in tierce, level with his right eye, and advanced very slowly on his adversary. His adversary met him also in tierce, so declining, but with every muscle in his thigh ready for his backward spring at the first feint. Van Dysart tapped his sword three or four times against his adversary's, made a rapid flickering feint in carte, and walked away laughing.

For an instant only. Turning and coming swiftly down, he attacked his adversary furiously, while the nearly maddened spectators clawed at one another in their frantic fury, for the devil's own beautiful game had begun with a vengeance now. The past was as nothing, the future was as nothing, in the glorious delight of mad excitement without danger. Nero had never provided such sport as this for the people. Here were two men of a hated and dreaded order, two of the best swordsmen in Europe, fighting for their glory and delectation. Grand sport.

"Did you speak to me, sir," said the policeman to Van Kenning.

"No," said the Alderman; "I was only speaking to my friend the Devil here. Make room for him between us, will you, constable. The Archbishop has got between him and the show."

The combatants were quiet again, breathing. No blood had been drawn, which pleased the people much, because they had been afraid lest Van Dysart, a safe killer, would only pink his man; but before they had time to swear more than a few oaths the two gentlemen were at it once more.

What are all our sports now in comparison with fencing? Why, a University race takes over twenty minutes to row—time enough to make your will. The Derby can be run and won in three minutes. In this short and last embroglio the competitors lived ten lives in twenty seconds. Eye, hand, brain and muscle acted on one another with a rapidity which was only slowly reproduced by the spark-like lightning of their swords. In twenty seconds the swords met and parted fifty times. In thirty seconds Van Dysart was wiping his sword on a white handkerchief, and his adversary, with the same fixed attentive look in his face which

he had worn all through the fight, was standing erect ; then his knees gave way and he fell down stone dead on his face.

Then the mob let the Archbishop get to him, and growled at him because he had not stopped the fight. But the Archbishop cared little, for he was kneeling beside the dead youth, holding a crucifix before his sightless eyes, and whispering in his ear from time to time, " Leon ! Leon ! "

But Leon happened to be dead, and the Archbishop was a practical man and found it out. The policeman came up to take charge of the body, and the Archbishop asked, " Where was Van Kenning ? " Van Kenning had gone off arm in arm to the Club with Van Dysart.

The Archbishop shook his head, but gave the policeman gold. " Take the body to my house ; I will go and break the news to them."

CHAPTER III.

THIS incident, as the reader may by this time have guessed, did not occur during the wild fierce time which succeeded the last war with France, when the lava stream of national ferocity was beginning to cool and crust, showing from time to time to incautious steppers the molten metal below. The surroundings were very similar, however, and in writing down the incident the pen naturally ran as though one were describing an embroglio of 1820.

But the time was about 1400, and the place was Ghent. Let one hope that concealing the fact for a single chapter has not puzzled the reader. We are free now ; the writer only asks that the reader will allow him to make the characters speak as they would now, and act as they do now, and did act then.

Perhaps one *spécialité* of ecclesiastics is their short quick walk. My friend A says that they walk so because they are conscious that they have nothing to do, and want to look as if they were earning their money. My friend B says that it is in consequence of their having worn long ecclesiastical dresses for so many centuries ; a theory which sounds rather Darwinian, although B is an orthodox of the most distinguished. C says that they walk in that manner from their haste after good works, and bend their heads from humility. D only says that he wishes they would walk like other people. However, they walk so. Why not ?

Does not a dragoon always walk as though he had his spurs on ? or a groom as though he had a saddle between his legs ?

The Archbishop had by no means walked in that manner while he was sauntering about and looking into the shops ; but now he walked in the ecclesiastical manner, and came swiftly round the corner on to a little girl about twelve years old, who carefully pulled up her outside frock, chose a clean place and knelt down for the archiepiscopal benediction.

It was promptly given in the usual manner, after which the girl raised her head and smiled, and the Archbishop said suddenly, and sharply, "Why, Marie."

He had just seen her brother killed in the street, and he was stricken almost dumb. The child was pleased and honoured by seeing him, and rising to her feet reminded him that he had promised to bless a little medal for her, and that he had forgotten to do so. She added, that she was seeking her brother Leon to come home to his dinner.

"He has had his dinner," said the Archbishop to her, with a sort of idea that he was not actually lying, because it was possible that Leon might be supping in paradise, even without the viaticum, having been in the main a most noble and godly youth. "I wish you to come with me, child."

"I will follow you, my father," she said ; and they walked on.

"Life is pleasant to you, child ?"

"Yes, father ; and the Sisters are kind, with the exception of Sister Priscilla, who is rough, and who says that I have no heart, not even enough to make my beauty a curse to me."

"She should not say such things. I will rebuke her. Turn your face to me."

The girl did so. It was a very beautiful face, with great promise of greater beauty for the future. When it was a little older it was painted by the hand of one of the few who loved her, and it hangs on the walls of the Museum at Bruges to this day, one of the gems of European art.

"She said the other day," continued the girl, "that the woman Martina, who has taken refuge with Margaret, had a better heart than I had."

"She should not speak to the child of such things," muttered the Archbishop. "I must speak to Priscilla. My child, do you fear death ?"

"The Sisters say that it is the gate of paradise."

"I do not mean for yourself. For another ? Suppose your brother Leon were to die."

"Then my brother Max would have two-thirds of Leon's money,

and I should have the other third ; that is, if I married John Van Eyck, which I mean to do."

The Archbishop groaned, for none of his theories would fit this case. He decided, however, that he would discuss the matter with Sister Priscilla, instead of scolding her, as he had at first meant ; which was a wise resolution, because Sister Priscilla, in spite of all her religious vows, was not a woman who would take a scolding from the Pope himself, leave alone an Archbishop, if she had persuaded herself that she was in the right, and if none of them could prove her wrong. She was in continual trouble about her vows of obedience. She was always at one time doing penances set her for the breach of those vows. Her practice was to perform the penances with a few additional ones, and then commit the sin over again still more emphatically. She had acquired the character of being a Sister of high merit, but peculiar in one or two ways ; given, for example, to persistent and occasionally objurative contradiction.

There is no doubt that poor old Father Ambrose begged the Archbishop, on his knees, to be removed from the office of confessor to the convent of which she was an ornament, and to be sent upon a mission to the Moors, and that he alleged Sister Priscilla to be the cause of his singular request. He was old, he said, and might earn martyrdom among the barbarians, but he could not stand the eye of Sister Priscilla. He was afraid to put even the most ordinary questions to the nuns, not for an instant mentioning the *élèves*. The Archbishop released him from his duties, and was foolish enough to send a strong square-headed young Dominican, with the brains of an elephant and the physical strength of a bull. Hence arose a fearful scandal. It was *said* that on his first entrance into the hall of the convent, Sister Priscilla had rushed from the collected nuns, fallen on that young man, and cuffed and towzled him in a disgraceful manner. But scandals in religious houses can be always hushed up (except when they do not exist), and so we know nothing of the truth of that matter. In short, in most things it was considered to be inexpedient to meddle with Sister Priscilla ; and one great reason was, that every one who knew her liked and thoroughly respected her.

Ghent, with all its multitudes, was roaring that day, a little more eager and noisy, if not more busy than usual. In a somewhat noisy street the Archbishop paused before a very large house of stone, even then darkened by time, and beat at a large door with his hand.

Towards the street the house was only a vast, nearly windowless

façade. In an instant the bolt was withdrawn, the Archbishop entered, and the door was slammed behind him, for one was never sure in those times whether one quiet man or a couple of thousand lunatics were about to enter.

Here was a change. Here was sudden peace, and nearly silence; for the roar of voices, and the clatter of wooden shoes over the pavement only came on the Archbishop's ear as the moan of the surf round capes and reefs comes to our ear from a hollow sea shell.

The great house formed at the back three sides of a quadrangle, adorned with flower beds set in green well-trimmed lawns, and broken by groups of shrubs. The fourth side of the quadrangle was made by a high wall, hidden by shrubs, and overarched with whispering poplars.

The Archbishop turned to the little old porter who had let them in, and was saying, "Why, Felix, you are as nimble as ever," when he was interrupted by a very quiet, solemn, and clear voice, which said—

"This is good of you, Archbishop. Come with me to my garden. I wish to speak to you very much."

"Hubert Van Eyck," said the Archbishop, "I have something very terrible to tell you. Marie, go play."

The man whom the world has known ever since, was at that time a not very *handsome* man, but one with a very gentle and intensely melancholy face. He had reddish hair, which was covered by a pink velvet skullcap, trimmed with ermine, otherwise was dressed very much like some Austrian soldiers of the present day, in a white tunic, in a few places slashed with blue satin, and tight-fitting blue silk hose. Such was the graceful figure which took the arm of the Archbishop and led him into the garden.

"I know the news," said Hubert. "I want you to break it to my sister."

"I have come to do so. Where is she?"

The two turned towards a tall building which formed the left-hand side of the quadrangle. Where it rose from the lawn it was a mere sheet of smooth stone, but aloft began to show out into very early pointed work, and just below the roof developed six long pointed windows. It had, in fact, been the refectory of an old conventual building, of which the house itself had been a cell.

They entered by a low door, and passed up a narrow winding flight of steps, by which probably the superior of the house had in old times mounted to refectory, for they came out by a little door on to the dais, now covered with the various lumber of an

artist's studio, and of a very rich artist also. The daïs was covered with costly velvet and satin robes, armour of price, swords and spears. And just where the light, cautiously admitted from one of the six tall windows, fell, was a full-sized lay figure of man and horse, in full panoply of damascened steel armour, heavily fringed with green satin.

The hall was very dark but for this one light, and another little one far down the hall, for the windows were on one side only, the other blocking out the world with a screen of stone. Looking from behind the dead horse and its rider, they saw below them an easel at which a woman stood painting.

The Archbishop crossed himself.

"She is painting Leon's armour," he whispered. "This is terrible."

"I borrowed it for her yesterday," said Hubert, also in a whisper.

The Archbishop stepped lightly down from the daïs towards her. She was not a beautiful woman, none of her family were *beautiful*. The forehead was strained and over large, and the skin upon it was tense. Her features were what is called regular; the eye was of dark hazel, with the concentration of an artist in it; and the mouth had the pout which an artist frequently gets by the habit of contemplating particular points carefully and steadily for a long time together; her figure, though not tall, was majestic, very well held up with a full fine bust. Her hair was closely braided in front of the cap of the time, which spread right and left of her head in two semicircles. Her dress, closed up to the throat, was as close as a lady's riding habit, laced over the bosom with long laces, and falling straight from her hips in long folds; its tissue was green satin, or its equivalent in those times. She was standing with her right foot advanced, which she was at that moment tapping with her mahlstick, reminding the Archbishop terribly of the action of Van Dysart's sword an hour before. In her left hand she held her palette and her sheaf of brushes. So stood, and now stands to some of us, Margaret Van Eyck.

"Margaret!" said the Archbishop.

"My Lord!" she said, quietly, with a brightened face.

"I am come to see you."

"Mind your way, my Lord; step cautiously over that helmet. That is right. Now, what brings you here?"

"Put aside your brushes, my child."

"Not I. I can talk while I am painting. I am painting Leon's armour. I can call him Leon now, good Lord, for the words have been spoken, and he is to marry me."

"Margaret, listen! You will never marry him."

"Has Van Dysart killed him?"

"Yes."

"I thought it would be so. Please be very silent. If my little bird were to sing now, I would kill it."

And she went on painting.

The Archbishop had in his vocation of priest seen women in most phases of passion and anger. Indeed he had got (having been confessor to some dozen convents) so used to scenes with women, that he had got as much used to them as a doctor; but here he was fairly terrified. The woman not only would not speak herself, but would not let him speak. Once more he said, "Margaret!" but she looked at him so terribly that he forbore. He only said, "May I wait here till you will speak to me?" and she said, "Yes;" that was all she said, and went on painting.

So the Archbishop sat down on one of the faldstools, which they had there for religious paintings, and watched her. After a few feeble daubs at her work, she put her tackle on one side, and lay down on a bench, with her arms over her head, and her face turned from him, moaning from time to time.

"She will cry soon," said the Archbishop, from his experience, "and then she will remember her religion."

"What is the matter?" said a hoarse voice, like that of a sixteen-year-old boy, in his ear.

"Leon has been killed by Van Dysart," said the Archbishop, "and I have told her of it."

"Hum," said the voice. "A nice youth too. Perhaps the other one will do now."

"I do not understand you," said he. "Had you not better see to her?"

"No; leave her alone," said Sister Priscilla. "When she wants me she will call for me. Let us stay here quiet. She will be like a boar of Ardennes in five minutes, if I know her. She and I have vexed our righteous souls in this hideous city of the plain until we are both half mad. Why God does not destroy Ghent is wonder to me."

"Indeed," said the Archbishop, "it needs prayer and fasting."

"There is plenty of praying; it is this fasting which is wanted," said Sister Priscilla. "It is for you to fix the balance, not a poor nun like me. Who are those at the lower end of the hall, and where is Hubert?"

"That is Hubert at the lower end of the hall," said he. "And there is a man behind him. They are going to tell John."

John Van Eyck was sitting far lower down the hall, in a

partially lighted window, copying some older painting than his brother's. The Archbishop and Sister Priscilla saw two figures approach him and tell him the news. They saw the boy—for he was little more—drop his painting tackle and cover his eyes with his hands, and then they saw the two older gentlemen coming slowly up to where they sat.

"They are coming," said Sister Priscilla. "I must rouse her. *He* will catch it."

"Hubert?"

"No, the other. Margaret, get up; here is your brother Hubert and another gentleman."

Margaret roused herself, looked about for her painting things, and not seeing them, looked about her rather wildly. The sight of her brother seemed to restore her, but the group soon found that she was not looking at him but at the man behind him. When she saw him she stood erect and bold, and called to him by name.

Every one present prepared for a scene, but for no such scene as followed. The Archbishop and Hubert hoped that she would have cried. Sister Priscilla hoped she would have scolded. She deceived them all.

She said quietly and sternly—

"Burgundy, stand forth from behind my brother's shoulder and answer."

"Before what court, Madam?"

"Before the court of an injured woman. More kings have lost their lives, my Lord, in that court than in any other. A seditious mob may be cut down, Duke, but even if you kill an injured woman her wrongs live after her and plague you for generations. Come before my court, my Lord Duke of Burgundy!"

Burgundy stood there before her, looking shamefaced and abashed, as dissipated men do look before women. His hair, cut short across low over his forehead, gave him a somewhat silly appearance; his bad complexion, and the working of a rather ugly mouth, did not much improve him; and he had shoved his black and gold velvet bonnet on to the back of his head, which made him look nearly idiotic. If one could see that face in profile, which one cannot, one would find power in it. The Duke of Burgundy, as he stood before Margaret Van Eyck that day, looked like a guilty fool, and he was neither, at least as politics went in those days. Certainly Louis XVI. was executed for less, but times have changed.

The Duke of Burgundy stood abashed before her anger. "What would you have me do?" he said.

And she replied—

“I want you to prove yourself a Duke—to do justice to yourself.”

“But how, and for what? Count Leon was killed in fair duel.”

“Fair? yes. But listen to the whole story. I plead as an infuriated woman before my Sovereign. I have had three lovers—Van Kenning, Van Dysart, and Leon.

“I cannot tell you why I did not marry Van Kenning; perhaps he was too old. But I can tell you why I did not marry Van Dysart:—because he ruined and cast to the dogs—to the dogs of the gutter—a woman with elements of good in her far greater than he ever had; and because I always hated him, Duke. He has avenged my hatred this unhappy day.”

No one spoke. She went on: “Leon I would have had, a noble youth, my Lord Duke—a noble youth.”

“But what can I do?”

“I want justice, vengeance on the murderer of Leon.”

“But it was not a murder. The man also is in good repute, both with courtier and workman. He is one of the shrewdest and most valuable counsellors I have. The Archbishop himself saw the duel; it was perfectly fair, was it not, sir?”

“Perfectly,” said the Archbishop.

“It is a lie,” snarled Sister Priscilla, in a voice which made them all start.

“I think not,” said the Archbishop, very meekly. “I think it was a very fair duel indeed. Most pretty fencing from first to last.”

“And you call yourself a priest!” cried Priscilla.

“Certainly, Sister; and consequently speak the truth about what I have seen, without regarding any of your idiotic and impudent declamations about things which you have not seen. It was a perfectly fair duel.”

“Well then, you see, Marguerite Van Eyck, I can do nothing. Hubert, what can I do?”

“You can do nothing whatever, Duke. I might fight him, but I should only get killed. I see no use in it; do you, Sister Margaret?”

“No, leave him alone,” she said, wearily. “You are all against me, sir.”

And they went, without one word of further protest from Sister Priscilla, which was odd, for her heart was in this matter. But that exceedingly shrewd woman had perceived that there was some set purpose between the three men, from seeing their eyes

meet. She hoisted herself into a high window, and saw the three go away together, with heads bent to her across the grass plot; and when she saw that she said, "God help Van Dysart, with those three against him—a priest, a rogue, and a genius." After which remarkable sentiment she came down and saw to poor Margaret.

CHAPTER IV.

THESE three strange heads, those of Hubert Van Eyck, the Duke of Burgundy, and the Archbishop of Ghent, were indeed close together, in very keen discussion indeed.

"Gentlemen," said the Duke, "let yours then be the open opposition; but remember always that I am assisting you, even when you see me smile upon him. The time may be long, and my hand may never be seen, but the end will come. Good morning. We shall not in future be so familiar as we were."

The Duke went between the flower-beds towards the wall which formed the fourth side of the square, and passing through the shrubs, opened a postern gate and came suddenly on a narrow canal overhung with windowless buildings. A barge lay a little way up, with a closely-drawn awning behind, rowed by four young men, chosen apparently for their good looks and their impenetrable stupidity, and steered by a very old man who had the expression of having seen a great deal. I should not like, had I been the Duke's enemy, to have been with them in that barge on a dark night in a lonely place.

A watchful face was peering from the awning as he stepped in. It was Van Kenning's.

"Well, my Lord Duke, and what said she?"

"She has demanded vengeance."

Not another word was said. At a sign from the Duke the men gave way, and going a little way along the canal, pulled up at some steps which rose from the water to a postern in the wall. Van Kenning stepped lightly ashore, gave a glance round, and disappeared in the doorway. The Duke's young men gave way once more, and soon every ripple had died away upon the surface of the canal.

But the Archbishop and Hubert walked up and down among the flower-beds, and during their walk they came upon a pretty sight which made them pause and withdraw silently.

Seated on the grass was young John Van Eyck, then about eighteen, in all the heyday of youth and fine clothes, and on his shoulder lay the beautiful head of Marie. She had been crying, but was quiet now and playing with a flower he had given her.

"He has told her and has comforted her," said Hubert.

"That is not a very difficult thing to do, my son," quoth the Archbishop.

Hubert only sighed, and they walked quietly away.

CHAPTER V.

IN the best corner of the best public room in a very large and elegant tavern, sat Van Dysart, wondering what he would do with himself.

Had he known everything he might have spared himself the trouble of thinking about that matter, for some others had taken his life in their hands. The man thought himself a gay and independent bachelor. Poor fool!

The world was well with him: he was rich, handsome, young, well-dressed, of good health and great personal strength and courage. Politically, also, he had great power. He was the bully of the Court and the representative of the working classes there.

He laughed as he thought, "I am the most dangerous man in Ghent." That was very true; but at the same time, dangerous men in Ghent, about the year 1400, were extremely apt to be unlucky. Advanced Whiggery was tolerated at Court—nay, even flattered and caressed, yet the caresses of that particular Duke of Burgundy were apt to be like certain precious oils which broke the recipient's head.

Lying there, a blaze of blue and scarlet satin, he pondered on what excitement there might be afloat, or who would drop in that morning. He might have saved himself the trouble quite well. There was amusement enough in store for *him*. Two voices, in rather more than friendly argument, were beginning to make themselves heard as they drew nearer to the room. One he knew, the other speaking in a foreign accent puzzled him.

"I am not a disputant either at backgammon or cards, neither am I a fighting man, Signor Spada, but I must take the liberty of telling you once more that you threw six ace from your ace-point and moved two points into your second table."

Van Dysart lay listening like a cat. That ill-tempered old cur Van Kenning was accusing the terrible Spada of Bologna, best swordsman of the day, of cheating.

By this time they were in the room.

"Sir," said the low growling voice of the Italian, "I have denied the fact once before. I moved six ace."

"You did not," said Van Kenning.

"Sir," said the Italian, "are you ready to fight?"

"Not with a man of your reputation," said Van Kenning, coolly.

"What do you mean by that, sir?"

"I mean with a man of your reputation as a swordsman."

The Italian growled, and threw his sword upon the table with a sniff. Van Kenning did not seem to be in the least disturbed, and the pair stood silent, Van Kenning drumming on the table with his knuckles.

Van Dysart was immensely interested. This was Count Spada of Bologna, the bravest man and the most consummate scoundrel in Europe without any known exception. Van Dysart had heard of his arrival at Ghent, and was dying to make his acquaintance: of course that old fool Van Kenning had picked him up first, and might have put him *aux mieux* with the Duke had it not been for the quarrel. Van Dysart looked at his man.

A middle-sized bull-necked Italian of about thirty, dressed in white with crimson slashes, with a scarlet bonnet and an ostrich plume of the same colour coming down over his left shoulder; a bullet-headed man, with an eye like polished jet and a beard like closely packed black horsehair, elasticity and vigour in his carriage, and a good-humoured rascality in every line of his face—such was the terrible Spada of Bologna.

"Two and two do not make five, Count," said Van Kenning; "neither do six-ace make seven."

"By St. Christopher and his holy coat, sir," said Spada, who although devoutly religious after each of his murders, was not up in details, "if I had a friend in the town, which I have not, you should answer for that language with your life."

"Very good, sir," said Van Kenning. "You threw six-ace, and played seven."

Of course there was nothing for Van Dysart to do but to rise and interfere. The blue and scarlet apparition arose from the sofa, to the great astonishment of Count Spada, who snatched up his sword, and retreating towards the door confronted his new adversary with a haughty bow.

"My dear Van Kenning," said Van Dysart, "may I ask what is wrong between you two?"

"He threw six ace and played seven," said Van Kenning, emphatically drumming on the table.

Spada stood erect, a column of unprotected innocence, without a friend in the town.

"Oh, but come, old Van Kenning, you *think* he did."

"I know he did."

Spada's muscles were as stiff as bone; he tapped his sword-hilt.

"Not one friend to back Spada of Bologna," he said, in a low melancholy voice. "If Van Dysart the swordsman could be found, he would not see me wronged thus, for we have heard of one another."

Had Van Dysart looked at Van Kenning's face instead of looking at Spada with a face of silly vanity at the compliment, he would have seen a look of utter wonder in Van Kenning's eyes. The unutterable impudence and dexterity of the Italian's last speech was too much for him, for he had just been spending what he thought wasted time in trying to teach him Van Dysart's name.

"I am that Van Dysart," cried out that gentleman. "Let me have the pleasure of making my rival's acquaintance."

The Italian took off his bonnet, and saluted courteously.

"You will then doubtless act for me in this matter. Coming an utter stranger into this town, and playing the game of tables with this gentleman (a game we play little in Italy), I am accused of cheating. There is, of course, but one way out of such an affair."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Van Dysart. "No one minds old Van Kenning. He is a non-combatant."

"In Italy," said Spada, "non-combatants keep their tongues between their teeth. If you think my honour acquitted, Van Dysart, I am content."

"Could any one question yours? Nonsense, my dear Count. A swordsman like you would only make himself ridiculous by an encounter with Van Kenning. Is it not so, my prince of good fellows?"

"I suppose so," said Van Kenning; "but he threw six ace and played six deuce for all that. You are going to take up with him, Van Dysart, I see that. Now in anything which follows from your acquaintance with him, never you have the impudence to say that I did not warn you of him."

And so he turned and went, leaving them both staring.

"A singular man," said the Italian, laughing.

"A very singular man," said Van Dysart. "He and I proposed to ourselves at one and the same time the honour of alliance with

the same young lady. She had the good sense to save me the trouble of putting my sword through him by refusing him. Since then I have liked the fellow."

"But he does not fight," said the Italian.

"No; but we have learnt something from Italian civilisation, and one of my grooms carries a knife. You understand."

"Oh, perfectly," said Count Spada. And, to do him justice, he spoke the truth for once.

"Will you drink?" said Van Dysart.

"A hogshead, if you like."

"Will you play?"

"Till morning, if it suits you. I am just now very rich, and shall never be comfortable until I have lost all my money."

"You are a good comrade."

"I am reputed so. My sword is rather rusty. Do you ever have an embroglio in the streets here? I should like a fight before we begin."

"I am the worst man in the world to come to just now. I killed a man in the street only three weeks ago, and my clients would not stand another. They have been disagreeable about him."

"Your clients?"

"I mean the working men."

"Ho!" said Spada. "And what was the young gentleman's name who got himself killed?"

"Well," said Van Dysart, "it was rather an ugly business. Let us have some Burgundy."

"I want Burgundy, at least the Duke of that name, most particularly," said Spada; "and I mean that you should present me to him. But a gallon of the wine meanwhile, if you please."

They had drunk two or three draughts—a modern pint of that noblest of wines—before Spada spoke again.

"Now about the young Count Leon. Was it a good rattle? Did he come rattling down on the back of his head, like a gentleman, or did he fall towards you and break your best sword, as that best and jolliest of companions, Nicolo of Padua, did with me when I killed him? I was very sorry for that business, for I loved the man; but we both wanted the same thing, and—what would you? By the organ of St. Agnes! I shed positive tears, sir, when I saw my beautiful Andrea Ferrara broken in half."

Van Kenning said once, that Providence intended to spare this man by showing him a caricature of his own cruelty.

"I will tell you about it," said Van Dysart, a little sulkily.

"I suspected him of telling tales to my detriment in a certain

quarter, and I said openly that I should kill him. I was utterly wrong. He behaved most honourably, although he supplanted me. The mischief was done by a nun, one Priscilla. Since I killed him, I have had a letter which proves it. I have it here."

"So you killed the wrong man?"

"It seems so."

"Yet he was a rival?"

"It is true; but I was not very keen on the scent."

"Ha! You are cold-blooded, you Flemings. You are ill, and unfit for play. Let us drink some more, and then take me to the Duke's court."

"Good; I will go comb my hair. Do the Italian gallants wear their hair in your fashion now?"

Spada said that it was the latest fashion. He might have added, among soldiers of fortune and *maitres d'armes*, but did not. Van Dysart went away to comb his hair.

When he was gone Spada looked puzzled. "There seems to be a soft place in the man; they told me there was none."

Van Dysart came back, and having adjusted their swords, they walked away through the streets towards the palace.

It was evening, and the workmen were abroad sitting almost in thousands in front of their houses. Van Dysart seemed almost ostentatiously to choose the streets which were most frequented by them. Many of them greeted him warmly, most looked kindly at him. It might seem at first strange that a young nobleman, known as a dicer and duellist and worse, should have power with them, as he undoubtedly had; but in any dispute he had always been on their side, and as for his amours, they had never been among their order. And his strength and splendid physical courage rendered him admirable to a great extent among a people who lived by their strength, dearly loved fighting, and who were as brave as their ancestors. Why, in the last half century England and America have both sent prizefighters to Parliament. And this man had infinitely more brains and mental training than Gully or Heenan.

Besides, why or wherefore does not matter just now, this man was very charitable. In spite of the Gilden there was often sharp distress, and this man's hand was always open. He had a good heart, said they, and would cure himself of his follies, which after all were only those of his order.

A popular man most undoubtedly. Had he not been lazy and vicious he might have been a rival to Van Kenning. But the working hands could only be fairly led by Van Kenning, whose good word was always for Van Dysart.

"So your rôle is to lead the rabble," said Spada, as they walked along.

"Yes," said Van Dysart, with a sneer. "And not a bad one. You shall see the reception at Court directly of the man who could burn the Duke's palace about his ears in an hour."

"The people are but little understood and not very well treated," said Spada, with a degree of honest emphasis, for his father had been an armourer or blacksmith, and he himself had been chosen as page for his beauty, and had risen to the position of Mameluke for his fiendish, careless courage, which his amazing physical vitality had saved from being spoiled by vice. In fact, like many another healthy pirate, he rather disliked vice, as interfering with business.

"Of that I know nothing, and care less," said Van Dysart. "I want power, and I get it through them. That is all."

"You have no sentimental feelings about the preservation of your order, then?" asked Spada.

"None whatever. All said and done, man, they are worse scoundrels than the workmen. I do not believe that there stands in this street a greater rascal than the Duke."

"You mean the Duke of Ferrara?"

"Yes, of course; the Duke of Ferrara. Hah! hah! You might have thought I meant the Duke of Burgundy."

"Not I. I agree with you about the Duke of Ferrara. He owes me money. Is he a good paymaster?"

"Yes; for dirty work. I never heard of a man asking for credit of his chimney-sweep."

Spada sung a little Provençal song, and sang it very prettily too. It was indiscreet, looking at the task in hand, but—he couldn't help it.

"Ci-gît Abelard,
Ci-gît il;
Parcequ'il croyait,
Ce que tout a dit."

"Quem deus vult perdere." They came to the door of the palace and went in.

Was there ever such a Court before or since? One fancies a great many. But Ghent at that time was exceptional, by all accounts.

There have been more drunken courts—that of James I. of England, let us say. There have been more extravagantly dressed courts—that of Venice in 1200. There have been more riotous courts. There have been more ferocious courts; but there have

been very few which equalled for combined riot, fury, sumptuary extravagance and general dissipation that of Ghent in those times.

The whole of the entrance-hall and the great stone staircase were crowded by courtiers in all kinds of fantastic dresses.

Van Dysart and Spada pushed their way through all this, up the stairs and into the hall of reception. Here matters were decent. There were chamberlains and officers around the Duke, who ceased speaking as the two splendid young dandies advanced up the room.

The Duke looked with keen interest at the two new-comers, more particularly at Count Spada. He seemed greatly satisfied.

"I have to ask leave to present to you Count Spada of Bologna, Duke."

"I receive Count Spada with all good will and honour," said the Duke. "You will sup with me to-night, you two. Do you make a long stay, Count Spada?"

"Who can say, Duke of Burgundy? I suppose until I have diced away my money, or have killed a man in a brawl, or done something else which will make me fly your Court. Few courts keep me long. I am better known than trusted. Dicing and brawling are the elements in which I live."

"Faith, then, you will do here," said the Duke, with a sneer. "Welcome to Pandemonium, thou fallen angel. I think that, take us all in all, we are the worst set of scoundrels in all Europe. What says Van Dysart, mine enemy?"

"Your Highness's very good friend," said Van Dysart.

"True, true," said the Duke. "There are none virtuous but you and I. Our virtue rusts at times, but it is there. Count Spada, you are welcome."

CHAPTER VI.

THE winter came down, the dykes and canals were frozen, and the snow brought new light and beauty to Ghent, and new misery to the lower part of the working population.

There was no good organisation of charity in those days, though perhaps as much of it as there is now. Immense doles were sometimes given, but they were ill administered. The Gilden, one is told, took as good care of *their* broken-down members as do the trades unions and benefit societies of to-day, all honour to them. There was but small poverty among *them*. It was among the class lower than them, among the hewers of wood and drawers of water,

the horse-holders and the innumerable ministers to the summer's luxury, in which the great distress was. Also great numbers of the lower agricultural population, who had gained a scanty subsistence in the country during summer, returned in winter to die warm instead of cold. It was among these classes that the work of the religious bodies lay.

And they did their best possible, notwithstanding occasional squabbles among one another, and a great deal of mismanagement and ignorance (we are not free from *that* yet). Great charities had then, as now, been diverted from their first intention, and had some of them, instead of (as now) being put into commission, been swallowed by the esurient house of Burgundy for their sins, to the never-ending exasperation of Father Peter and his bosom friend, Sister Priscilla, who were always going to write to Rome about these things, but who never had time.

Father Peter was a secular clergyman of extremely advanced radical views, like his coadjutor, Sister Priscilla. These two worthy democrats between them led the good Archbishop the deuce of a life. They were always urging him to write to Rome for them, and he was always pointing out to them that it would be certain ruin to all three to do so. As for those two, they would have walked barefooted to Rome, and denounced the great and awful house of Burgundy before that most terrible of tribunals.

It was a cold day, and all the architecture was marked by lines of silver snow upon its frettings, when Sister Priscilla and Father Peter met at a windy street corner, and refreshed themselves with a little sedition.

"A plague on Dukes, *I* say," began Sister Priscilla, "I am sick and stupid with Dukes; and what do we want here with Dukes of Burgundy? I wish he would go back there, and then honest folks might lead decent lives."

"It is good for trade," said Priest Peter, whose nose was blue with cold, who was fasting, who had unwittingly lost a paper containing a handsome list of masses, which had been farmed out to him, and in consequence the money for them; which was part of his miserable income: so he was fractious and impracticable.

"Why?" said Sister Priscilla.

"Why?" snapped Priest Peter; "you may well say why?"

"Then I will say it again," said Sister Priscilla, and did so. Whereupon Priest Peter, well knowing her powers of iteration, asked her suddenly which way she was walking. She on her part answered him after her usual manner, that is to say, by keeping to her subject until she had made an end of it.

"Trade! and you a Christian priest! Trade! Devil's trade!

Trade! I wish he would trade away to Paris again. We Flemings were honest until these Burgundians with their scum of Paris and scum of Italy came and polluted us. As far as a Christian may curse, I curse the worthless house of Burgundy."

"Thanks, sweet nun," said a clear, sharp voice behind her. "I will remember you in my prayers the next time I do not forget to say them. Philip, of that accursed house of Burgundy, would be glad for a direction to the Judenstrasse."

Peter the Priest slunk away appalled. While he had been arguing with Sister Priscilla a large procession had approached them over the silent snow unheard; that procession now stood silent in the bright white street, so fantastically strange and beautiful, that he paused in his terror to look on the splendid picture.

Contrasted with the white snow were a gaudily-dressed group of nobles and courtiers, perhaps numbering some twenty, grouped with unstudied elegance. When I say that they were gaudily dressed, I simply mean to use that word in its old sense, for their clothes were selected with that instinct for pure colour which we lack now, and for which our best artists are returning, as it were humbly and on their knees, to learn of the men of olden time. The effect to the eye was that of a number of the best and most tenderly coloured butterflies, say purple emperors and Camberwell beauties, on a ground of surrounding snow. Crimson passed into purple, and purple into bright cold sharp blue; maroon declined into brown, and then was lit up with pure primrose yellow, and amidst it all was the gleam of gold everywhere, and the firelike flash of jewels. The slight motion which they allowed themselves was merely marked by the motion of the plumes in their bonnets, that head-dress which all nations have abandoned save the Scotch. Otherwise the magnificent bevy of beautifully-dressed feudalists was still in amused expectation. Further away in the snow the Priest could see a file of grey steel-clad guards, solemn, inexorable, with thought and responsibility crushed out by routine; behind again, the dim-coloured mob, each man of which was a world to himself, save for a few days in each year, when the privileges of his order were in danger, and he rose, fought, and died as bravely as the best courtier among them all.

Priest Peter stood entranced. Radical and ecclesiastic as he was, he would have made his picture of showily-dressed ecclesiastics, and an entourage of dimly-coloured poor, who should follow the ecclesiastics, and do their bidding humbly. But it was not so: there were the courtiers in all their beauty, grace of movement, power of action, perfection of cultivated colour; behind

them grey inexorable guards ; behind the guards the people, gazing as near as they dared at the men who were eating their hearts, yet ready to swarm on them at any moment, and hunt them like wild beasts, and who had, in fact, done so before, and were to do so again, as it were fruitlessly, until the dull thunder of Drake's cannon came booming upon the ear of Parma, and the uncertain dawn of freedom began to grow into certain glorious day, and the romantic art which these nobles represented, to cease upon the world of nature.

Priest Peter, hating it all, still admired : his eye had been educated ecclesiastically, and had taught him what colour was ; and, moreover, a man gets his purest and most delicate ideas of colour from the half-toned dresses of the poor. Yet after a minute of admiration for the courtiers, and a glimpse of thought about the political situation which the spectacle showed him, his attention was entirely absorbed by the group of three, which was in advance of the courtier group, and nearest to him, the group from which he had seceded.

Sister Priscilla, coal black, with her legs planted in a determined manner into the snow.

Philip of Burgundy, afterwards Philippe le Bon—a pale youth, of great physical power but loosely built, dressed in violet velvet with crimson hose, not as you see him now, but brighter and younger, with a sense of humour about that great mouth of his, which we look in vain for afterwards.

John Van Eyck, his alter ego, who was to become his love confidant, the wooer of his bride—to play Buckingham to his Charles Stuart—to leave Margaret and Hubert and to follow his darling prince—to leave the people for the Court—to leave his wife to the lottery, his daughter to the nunnery—and yet, though degenerated from his greater brother, to keep his art pure and undefiled through it all : raising our souls nigh heaven, while he must have been dragging his own near hell. An old story this of the handsome youth who stood by young Philip of Burgundy in the snow, dressed in puce satin slashed with crimson. An old, old story. The priests insist to one that the merits of the ordinances are not retracted by the unworthiness of the ministrant ; may it be so in art ? One who was a courtier, and no more, could not have painted the four kneeling angels.

“ Nun, nun,” said young Philip of Burgundy, “ you were cursing our house. What prevents me from delivering you over to justice, and having you fried ? ”

Sister Priscilla sniffed, and pointed right over his head at the dull-coloured swarming behind the guards.

"Precisely," said Philip. "John Van Eyck, my beloved, this woman is a woman of vast penetration. Van Janssen!"

A courtier stepped up at once.

"Catch me that lurking priest, will you? bring him here, and call up a file of the guards and walk him off to prison."

Priest Peter was at once brought back, five guards were put in possession of his person, and Philip gave them the order to take him to the gaol in the Place.

"Which way, Sire?" asked the courtier.

"Which way, fool? There is but one; back that way, right through the mob, to be sure."

And Priest Peter with five guards was marched solemnly through the swarming workmen, Philip of Burgundy never waiting to see the result, but marching away with his guards and courtiers in another direction, with the enforced attendance of Sister Priscilla.

"There is nothing against the priest," said John Van Eyck.

"I only wanted to give those dogs a lesson," said Philip. "Now, Mistress Nun, step out: gentlemen, follow."

CHAPTER VII.

"Move on, gentlemen," said young Philip of Burgundy; and the procession moved quickly through the snow after him, Philip, John Van Eyck, and Sister Priscilla foremost. Philip in violet velvet and crimson hose; John Van Eyck in puce satin slashed with crimson; and Sister Priscilla in most inexorable and emphatic black. Behind them the courtiers, dressed in colours which would kill Mr. Burne Jones with envy. Behind the grey steel-coloured guards; behind again the dull brown-coloured mob, swarming along the snow-white street, like a highland river in spate amidst snow-covered meadows.

"Nun," said Philip of Burgundy, "do you know what I am going to do?"

"No good, I should say, if you are your own father's son," replied Sister Priscilla. "But it is a wicked world, and they say that you are not wicked."

Philip of Burgundy laughed, just as he laughed afterwards when Bruges had been destroyed. "She is a vixen, this nun, John," he said.

John Van Eyck was decidedly of opinion that she was little better.

"Hear me, nun," said Philip of Burgundy. "I am going to 18, Judenstrasse, an ugly place, and I am going to take you, as a religious woman, for respectability's sake."

"To keep off the mob?" remarked Sister Priscilla.

"Exactly so," said Philip.

"What do you want there?" she asked. "But," she continued, "what is the good of asking? Your house are all liars born and liars bred. If I wanted to get the truth from any member of the cursed house of Burgundy I should have to lie myself, in hopes that I might get the truth from you through sheer opposition. Your house is winning, and that is the character which you have gained from the people. I speak as one who knows the people; that is to say, one who knows the opinions of the men's wives. Van Kenning will tell you what the men tell him, and he knows much. Van Dysart will tell you what the men tell him, and he knows nothing. The men tell their wives their whole soul, and the wives tell me. And the men have told their wives, and their wives have told me, that the house of Burgundy is a rotten, stupid, and cruel house, and that it shall go down."

"How soon, vixen?"

She knelt down on the snow, and began in a loud, shrill voice, the 76th Psalm.

"Take her up, Van Eyck," said Philip, furiously. "Popery is maddening all these fools. What do you mean by kneeling on the snow?"

"Some shall kneel on the snow, but not to thee, Burgundy," was her very quaint answer. What she meant when she spoke was that the trades unions, led by ecclesiastics, would kneel on some winter's night, before a revolutionary movement. Her words were fulfilled oddly enough afterwards.

While John Van Eyck was dusting the snow off her knees, Philip of Burgundy asked her once more, "Do you know for what purpose we are going to 18, Judenstrasse, and why I have taken you into custody to keep away the mob?"

"Yes," said Sister Priscilla, "yes, I know. Thank you, John Van Eyck, *you* are a gentleman. Yes, I know all about it. We are all bent on the same object. Some of us will go to heaven and some to hell. With regard to this expedition: I understand all about it. You want to catch Van Dysart in that house."

"You are right, nun," said Philip of Burgundy.

Sister Priscilla turned on him with a look of utter scorn. "Of course I am right," she said.

"Shall we catch him?" said Philip.

"He must be a great fool if we do; as great a fool as you are yourself," said Sister Priscilla. "I sent him word that you were coming three hours ago."

The good nature of Philippe le Bon never deserted him. He only said, "Your reason?"

Sister Priscilla looked at him for a moment and then said quietly, "Sir, you are the first true gentleman of your house. I will tell you why I have traversed your plans in this manner. The man's time is not come. I am, like yourself, though for different reasons, engaged in the ruin of this man; but his time is not come. Burgundy, consider. If I had allowed the net to be drawn round that man to-day; if I had allowed you, in your blundering, stupid Burgundian folly, to take that man in the stronghold of the Jewish illuminati, he would have had the people with him. I want him free for a time, until the people understand him. I want him to have it all his own way, till the time comes which has not come yet. You could have hung him to-day. what then? The murderer of Margaret's lover—I speak to you, John Van Eyck—would have been a martyr. John, I will not have it so. John Van Eyck, leave this man to us—to Priscilla the nun, to Van Kenning the politician, to Spada the scoundrel. He thinks that he is going to be let off so easily. He thinks that he is going to die in peace—he, the murderer of Leon. No! No! Ten thousand times no. Every hound is on his trail. Every sin against him is being brought up. The Bishop, Father Peter, Spada, Van Kenning, all of us, bad and good, are on his track, and this stupid house of Burgundy chooses to step in between us and our vengeance. Ha! Ha!"

"You are mad, and your sentiments are not those of a religious woman," said John Van Eyck, with the base Court twang.

"You are a greater fool than your friend Philip of Burgundy," said Sister Priscilla, looking at Philippe le Bon. "He will use you and ruin you. Princes always do. But he knows what vengeance is, and I am one in a great plot to avenge the death of your sister's lover."

"But she does not know anything of this?" said Philippe le Bon.

"She asked your father for vengeance, my Lord—at least, my Lord, they say so. She asked for vengeance. She asked it of Van Kenning, and he asked the Duke."

"You are a very curious sort of nun," said Philippe le Bon. "How do you make all this fit in with your Christianity?"

"I *am* a very curious sort of nun" said Sister Priscilla.

"Every one knows it; and I do not make it fit in with my Christianity in any way whatever. One thing I do know. Van Dysart killed my own Margaret's pretty lover, and I will hunt him to ruin for it if I should lose heaven in doing so."

"But surely," said Philip of Burgundy, "her brothers——"

"Her brothers!" said Sister Priscilla, furiously. "Her brothers would quarrel with her if she did not mix their paints right. He, the good Leon, killed like a dog by this scoundrel Van Dysart, would have been petulant with her after he was tired of her. It is so with men. I have read in Scripture that there is a love between men, a pure and beautiful love surpassing the love of man for woman—of which I know nothing. But, Burgundy, there is a love of woman to woman surpassing the love of man towards woman. I have this love for Margaret Van Eyck. I tried to laugh her out of her love for Leon, but could not, and so I yielded, and he became flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone. And Van Dysart killed our pretty boy in the street, Burgundy, and I am mad against him."

"Madam," said Philip of Burgundy, who was a gentleman after the pattern of his time, "think of your religious vows."

"That is what maddens me," said Sister Priscilla.

Philip could think of nothing particular to say, matters had gone utterly out of his sphere. But he found that he was conceiving a profound respect for this famous nun, although he could not help thinking that she was at no good work.

John Van Eyck, with the dreadful voice of the artist-courtier, remarked—

"If the good Sister is correct, why should we go on to 18, Judenstrasse?"

"Let us go on," said Sister Priscilla. "*He* will think that we have played our trumps. Let us go on. He will shame us through not having been there. But mind you, Burgundy and Van Eyck, that we must keep our own counsel. Cannot you imprison me for false information, Burgundy?"

"I will speak to my father about it, if it is agreeable to yourself," said Philippe le Bon; "but I do not think that you would like it. However, I have not the least doubt that my father would hang us all up by the neck, if we asked him. Here is 18, Judenstrasse."

A place like a wynd in Edinburgh. The courtiers swarmed in, with Burgundy, John Van Eyck, and Sister Priscilla. It was a house of bad repute, and the young courtiers were noisy and riotous when they got into the large room upstairs, having no idea in the world for what purpose they were brought there.

There was an old lady, who bowed very much, and was glad to see such a gallant company in her poor rooms. Nothing else. No Van Dysart or Spada, not a shadow of them. One jocular young courtier thought that he would amuse Burgundy by kissing Sister Priscilla; which he did: but the next instant the old Burgundy fist—a very emphatic one—knocked out two of his teeth, and left him lying with his head in the fireplace; and the old Burgundy voice—also a very emphatic one—said, “Curse you, you hound, leave the nun alone!”

That night Philippe le Bon (as he was to be) could not go to bed without John Van Eyck to take off his shoes. And Philip said to John—

“We are not in a good business at all!”

And John Van Eyck asked him what he meant.

“This revenge business. We are all wrong. What does Hubert say of it?”

“I am not my brother’s keeper,” said John Van Eyck, with a smirk.

“Well,” said Philip, “our house has done darker jobs than this. But I don’t like it. That nun Priscilla has upset me: blow out that candle, and go to bed.—What’s that? Fallen down? I should think you had, from the noise. Fallen over the page, eh? Kick the young rascal in the ribs, and tell him if he snores I will comb his head with the bedstaff.—I say, John!”

“My Lord!”

“My groom is on the floor there, in the corner somewhere. Kick him, will you?”

John Van Eyck found a young man in a corner near the fire, and aroused him gently.

“You dog!” said Philip.

“My Lord!” said the groom.

“If you do not wake me at dawn to-morrow morning, I will have you flayed alive.”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“Have you heard the conversation between myself and John Van Eyck?”

“Every word, my Lord.”

“Then you must be put to death.”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“Go to bed, Van Eyck, do. I do not know which is the greatest fool of us all. Sometimes I think I am, but generally I think it is you: the groom is the wisest man of the lot, for he can tell the truth—a habit which you and I have forgotten.”

John Van Eyck went to bed, and the groom and page slept before the fire in the room of young Philip of Burgundy. But in the middle of the night they were awakened. Philip of Burgundy had given the cry which had awakened them, and as he slept naked, as all men did then, what they saw when they started, scared from their slumbers, was the young duke in bed, sitting up, bare to the waist, with the horror of nightmare on his face, and every muscle in his body rigid.

"The nun is the worst devil!" he shrieked. "Where is my mother?"

The groom, his foster-brother and henchman—an arrangement which prevails still in the Highlands—put his arm round his neck, and tried to soothe him.

"Jan! Jan!" said Burgundy, "I have been dreaming of all the devils in hell, and the worst devils were the nun and Van Kenning. I told Van Eyck to kick you; I would have killed him if he had. But *he* knows that. Do *you* approve of this?"

"Of what, my Lord?"

"Of this—of this horrible conspiracy. If I were to tell you, would you kill a man for me at once?"

"Of course I would, my Lord. Go to sleep; you are joking."

"It were better to have him killed at once. I will go to Hubert to-morrow."

"If you wish my knife into his body, my Lord, you had better not speak to Hubert Van Eyck; he would never permit it."

"Your knife? and into whose body?"

"Maria! into Van Dysart's. Is there a Burgundian who would not assassinate him? but leave him to his own ways, and trust in the devil's justice."

And so Philip of Burgundy fell from his henchman's arms and slept.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE man Van Dysart was utterly doomed. The earth was sick of the dog, and in the whole world he had no friend—at least, no friend who had the least power. I only write the present story to show how a man may be hunted to death by a combination of people acting under different motives for the same object. Some people have a way of making deeply bitter enemies: Van Dysart was one. I fear that I must ask you to follow me while I go through

the list of this most unhappy man's enemies ; and I fear also that I must ask you to remember them. If the man had no friend in the world, surely in common chivalry we may remember the names of his enemies.

First, then, Van Kenning—why not John Duke of Burgundy ? you say. I answer, that the Whig, Van Kenning, was much more powerful than John Duke of Burgundy. Burgundy knew it. Van Kenning was the Whig of the time ; he kept peace between the Court and the workers. He was the soul's health and comfort to John of Burgundy. Van Dysart was one person, Van Kenning was another. Van Dysart was a man who would bet that the cathedral could be knocked down without his own house, built just below it, suffering in any way. Van Kenning, on the other hand, knew well that even the boldest of the labouring hands were not sufficiently foolish to wish for a redistribution of that fund which is called by some wages fund, by others capital, for say, twenty-five years, with the loss accruing on interest, at that time some thirty-five per cent. Van Kenning considered, as a Whig, that matters could be brought round comfortably without an elective presidency : Van Dysart rather liked the idea of an elective presidency. So they were political enemies, and the political question remains to this very day ; it is scarcely altered from its old position. The question still remains—"Are the people fit to govern themselves, or are they not ?" To this great question we decline to give an answer here. We only say, that Van Kenning was of opinion that the people in Ghent required guiding ; and that Van Dysart, the gamester, said that he thought that the lowest and least educated class in the community were fit to manage their own affairs. Further than this we have nothing whatever to do with the matter. But it enables us to see that Van Kenning, the respectable Whig, and Van Dysart, the Tory radical, were at loggerheads on political matters.

Now Van Kenning had a devotion to Margaret Van Eyck, to which the devotion of Abelard to Heloise was a boyish passion, to which the love of Petrarch to Laura was a mere piece of maundering sentimentality. He was a man of pure life and of excellent morality. He was what would now be called a doctrinaire radical : a man who felt deeply the wrongs of the people, and a man who would right them by any means. When he was a little younger than he was at the time of which we speak, Margaret Van Eyck had appeared to him one morning, and in her quiet calm way had required him to come to her brother's studio and sit to her for his portrait. He agreed, and so day after day he sat before her, talking with her about the wrongs of the people.

The result in one way is the portrait of the man in minever on the left voile of the greatest picture in Europe ; the result in another way was this : that Van Kenning fell deeply in love with her, and that he asked her to marry him.

She said that she would marry no one.

Said Van Kenning, "I think you lie !" for they spoke so in those times.

"I think I do not," said Margaret. "I would not marry any man. Why should I ? If you wish to be answered that I love you deeply and heartily, you may go away with that assurance. But I do not wish to marry you. Why should we marry. I think that I love you too well to marry you. Surely we can love one another without marrying."

"Will you marry another man ?" said Van Kenning.

"Which man ?"

"Van Dysart."

"Let him marry Martina."

"Leon ?"

Margaret put down her palette and her brushes very quietly, and looked Van Kenning straight in the face. "I doubt I did lie, Van Kenning," she said. "I think I would marry him, if he asked me."

"Let it be so, then," said Van Kenning, quite quietly.

"In what way ?" said Margaret Van Eyck.

"Merely in this way," said Van Kenning : "You are my choice ; he is yours ; I give all my life to you and to him. I would give all my life to you, but you will not accept it. My life must be given to you and to him. This answer of yours is death to me ; but I will try to do my duty by you and by Leon."

Now it occurred to him that he had *not* done his duty according to his promise, in the fatal duel between Van Dysart and Leon. The only ugly thing in the whole life of Van Kenning was that duel. He could have raised the very devil of democracy over that duel, but did not. He could have stopped it, but did not. The Archbishop, douce man, could have done nothing ; but Van Kenning could have roused the people by many cries. Why did he not do so ? It is an ugly question, not to be answered by me. Margaret forgave him, and he is walking towards the glory of heaven in the left voile of the great picture ; but he never forgave himself. The most dangerous, ruthless, and deadly enemy Van Dysart had for a time was Van Kenning.

John of Burgundy was of course Van Dysart's enemy. We in these days have done what Sièyes said *he* had done (which he had

not), *Achever la politique*. Mr. Bright speaks some sharp truths, and Auberon Herbert does the same. In the cases of Van Kenning and Mr. Bright you expect chronic radicalism; but when you see young aristocrats going in for strong radicalism, as in the cases of Auberon Herbert and Van Dysart, you may depend that something is wrong in the State. We are very sorry to have to make any personal allusions in a novel; but Mr. Auberon Herbert so nobly represents his order, that I think I have full right to speak of him in comparison with the typical Cimbrian nobleman of the fifteenth century, Van Dysart. These aristocrats have learnt their lessons, and are doing grandly. The people are not out of their leading-strings yet, but require leaders. In the fifteenth century they had such leaders as Van Kenning and Van Dysart. In the nineteenth century they get leaders like Gladstone, Bright, Lowe, and Auberon Herbert. Compare the new with the old, and you will see how far the people are winning; compare Van Dysart with any leader of the day, and form your own conclusions. It seems that the educated class have learnt their duty, and are honestly bent on pursuing it.

John of Burgundy hated the people, and the people hated him; had Van Dysart had the virtues of a good modern nobleman, he might have been dangerous to the terrible Burgundy himself. He was not dangerous, for the people believed in his virtue, with all their faults; but John of Burgundy thought him dangerous, and Philip his son hated the man heartily.

The Archbishop was a churchman and a gentleman, a perfectly good man in every way. The Archbishop had large revenues, but they were not spent on himself, but on the poor. A decent sumptuousness prevailed in his house, but only for the credit of his church. His sisters lived with him and managed his household; there was not a better managed house in the Netherlands. To the Archbishop the man Van Dysart was a hideous horror.

A priest, be he Catholic or Protestant, lives solely for his religion. It is the breath of his nostrils: there are some hypocrites among the ministers of all creeds, but we believe but very few; and a mere hypocrite will stand by his cloth to the death, as a mutineer will stand by his regiment when shot and shells begin to rive the earth about him. The Archbishop was no hypocrite, but a thorough true and noble person, unceasing night and day in good works, as gallant a man as any in the Netherlands: radical, as all true priests must be; conservative, as all priests are of necessity. Yet our brave Archbishop had that feminine spite which is born of exclusion. He was married to a bride, to the *Church*. To him the Church was a *wife*. All the

powers of his nature were thrown into the Church, and he begot sons upon her, and very noble sons some of them were. Now, with a man of such a nature as the Archbishop's, you will find that it is dangerous to come between him and his wife. Van Dysart was an open scoffer, and was competing for power among the people with the Archbishop. One of them must go down, and the Archbishop was most emphatically determined that the one who went down should not be he, the Archbishop. The Archbishop had sense, courage, and power; Van Dysart had merely the ear of the more turbulent factory hands; the Archbishop had the ear of the women.

And he had determined that Van Dysart must go. Alone he would have been sufficient to destroy the friendless man, for the man was friendless at Court now; but in addition to the terrible enemies of whom we have spoken above, the unhappy Van Dysart had three others.

The woman Martina, whom, as they said, he had ruined and cast on the streets, but who, in spite of her sins and her wildness, could rouse Ghent, and rousing Ghent in those times, when there were no *chassepôts*, was a fearful thing. Thanks to Hausmann, who cut into revolutionary Paris while she was asleep, and made her pay £40,000,000 for it afterwards, the party of order can now pound its St. Antoine at its leisure.* In Ghent, at the time of which we speak, things were not so. A woman of bad character, with a drum, half-a-dozen radical priests, and the same number of trades union leaders, were capable of raising such a wasps' nest about the Imperial ears of Burgundy as made Burgundy think twice—nay, three times—before he dared the hazard of the battle. The perfection of artillery is the death of democracy. Storks and Palliser could have stopped the French Revolution. Fancy the unutterable hay which would be made of any six hundred dusty-footed gentlemen who advanced on Paris from Marseilles *now*. There is something fearful in contemplating the power which is put into the hands of the ruling powers by the mere possession of guns. One comfort is, that the ruling parties have not learnt their power, or liberty would be dead. It was not so in Ghent at this time. The working people were closely packed, and knew personally and by sight every one in any way notorious. They knew Van Dysart and Martina; they knew how he had treated her, but they were used to that. The dangerous party among the workmen liked Van Dysart. The safer and more powerful body loved from the bottom of their hearts Van

* All this was written before recent events.

Kenning. But nevertheless, God often puts green heads on grey shoulders, and if this girl, young and beautiful yet, were to take it into her head to proclaim her unalterable wrong through Ghent, and call for vengeance, matters might go very ill with Van Dysart. Van Kenning desired that matters should go ill with Van Dysart, and the Duke of Burgundy had hired that utterly scoundrelly good humoured hound, Spada of Bologna, to see that matters *did* go wrong with Van Dysart.

Duke John and Philippe le Bon were talking together when Spada was shown in. "Come here, you scoundrel," said John Duke of Burgundy.

"Don't call him scoundrel, father," said Philippe le Bon, aloud, and in the very coolest manner. "You must remember that if he is a scoundrel, he is also a gentleman."

Spada burst out laughing. "This looks good," he said to the Duke of Burgundy. "This looks like employment, obligation, and what is more to the purpose, money. But with regard to business. When three thorough-going scoundrels get together, my Lord Duke of Burgundy, they generally mean business, and generally *talk* business."

"Sir," said the Duke of Burgundy, "you are very insolent."

"Of course I am, Duke. If I were not the most insolent man in Europe I should not have been here. I suppose that you want to buy my impudence. It is at your disposal, at a reasonable sum."

"You should be more respectable," said the Duke.

Spada at once cast his bonnet on the floor, advanced to the Duke and kissed his instep. "Anything more required, my Lord Duke, or shall we have it all over at once?"

Philippe le Bon began giggling. "Say what you want, father." And the great Duke John laughed again.

"I want some work from you. Have you diced away all your money?"

"No," said Spada, "I have still some left. I will not trouble you at present." And saying this the magnificent animal drew himself up and showed himself before the two as the beautiful and terrible scoundrel which he was. The splendid elasticity of his body excited the curiosity of the then head of the athletic family of Burgundy. "Why, man," said Duke John, "you are as strong as I."

"If your Highness will give me the chance I will prove that I am the stronger," said Spada.

"I am too old and too fat," said John of Burgundy. "But let us come to business. I want a man out of the way."

"I have put many men out of the way for many Princes, and hope to put many more. It pays."

"As to the consideration?" said the Duke.

"I always leave the money part of the business to the Prince," said Spada. "I never yet was disappointed in my expectations by a Prince or nobleman in trifling details of this kind. I am a man who does not bear disappointment. What can be done for the goose can be done for the gander. Now, Lord Duke, who is your man, and how is it to be done?"

"The man is Van Dysart."

Spada, with his nerves of iron, actually started. "I do not understand you," he said.

"This fellow, Van Dysart, must be got rid of," said the Duke.

"But I had orders to that effect before, my Lord Duke. I have been as diligent as a man could be."

"From whom did you get your order?" said the Duke.

"From yourself through Van Kenning, my Lord."

"You can't prove *that*," said the Duke.

"My Lord," said Spada, "let there be honour among gentlemen. I cannot. I never prove anything. The trade by which I live and thrive requires, like your own, a total absence of logic and morality. I have no more logic or morality than you, my Lord Duke. So I am absolutely and entirely dumb. I was doing the thing you want me to do, but in a roundabout manner. Do you want me to get rid of the man suddenly and sharply; do you wish me to fight him, or do you wish me to assassinate him? In the case of your requiring his assassination, my Lord Duke, I must require the fullest assurances from you that I must go free. It is a part of the business by which I live which I have never taken up. I must make a very stout bargain with you, my Lord, before I do that."

"Confound the rascally Italian," said the elder Burgundy. "I don't want the man *murdered*. I want him *ruined*."

"Oh, that is all!" said Spada. "What a pity it is that we had not understood one another before. My dear Duke, you can make your mind perfectly easy; I am hard at that work, with others. I was afraid that you were going to pay me to cut the throat of my milch cow. My dear Lord, my good Duke, my most reverend Duke of Burgundy, I live by that young man. Conceive the relief it is to my mind to find that you do not want me to cut his throat. Of course I should have done so. I would cut yours if I was paid for it at a sufficient price. You only want me to ruin him?"

"That is all."

"That is a very easy business ; there are others at it with me."

"Allow me to offer you this purse," said the Duke of Burgundy.

"Thanks. Allow me to decline it. I thought you wanted his throat cut. But I get as much as I want for a man of my simple habits out of the poor hound at play. I won't take your money."

"You are an honest rascal," said the Duke.

"Duke, if one rascal may speak to another, I would say that I am an honest rascal."

"Sir ?"

"Sir, I will prove it. In this matter you have no need of me. There are two who will hunt that man, Van Dysart, to ruin and never trouble us. You would have thrown the money you would have given me to the dogs, Duke."

"Who are these two ?" asked the Duke.

"As usual, a priest and a nun," said Spada. "Soldiers, priests, and nuns govern this world as of old."

"But what priest and what nun ?" asked the Duke, aghast.

"The priest is called Father Peter, a Secular ; the nun is one Priscilla, a Sister of the order of the Holy Heart."

"I know them," cried Philippe le Bon.

"Doubtless," said Spada. "A young Prince so given to holy works as the heir apparent to the throne of Burgundy *would* know such people."

Philippe le Bon's temper broke down utterly at this. "You infernal dog !" was the only expression which the well-known hereditary powers of-objuration furnished him with.

"I beg your pardon," said Spada, very coolly ; "I was talking to your father until you interrupted me. I was saying that this priest and nun will hunt the dog down for us, for love, not for money. Speaking merely as a man of the world and a soldier, I should say that you had better not employ me. My character is not good. I am a notorious bully. I have been seen with you two, and if anything was to happen to this Van Dysart through me, it would be said at once that you had hired me. The priest and the nun will do the matter quietly. I do not want money ; I can win all the money I want from him. I would really not employ me if I was in your place, Duke."

And so the Duke said that he would not.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE went about in these days in Ghent a swift dirty priest, with a little grey dog. And there went usually with him a swift nun, who told beads and said prayers as she walked; and she said her prayers and told her beads with such singular emphasis, that the people of Ghent called her the Cursing Nun.

Whenever these two passed through the crowded streets at the dinner hour of the workmen at high bright noon, a lane was made for them, partly from respect, partly from terror. The enormous rush of workmen from the factories in Ghent in those days was so great that no women or children dared stay in the street after the noonday bell. Yet this shabby priest and this cursing nun might go where they listed, and the little grey dog might follow the priest with his little pattering feet, for the dog was of the people, and the people, with their feminine instincts, knew it. Neither John or Philip of Burgundy dare take their bloodhounds among the people, but the little grey dog could go anywhere.

There were very few of these little grey dogs then in the Netherlands, and indeed there are but few now. The blood of the Macdonalds has fertilised every battlefield in Europe, yet they for the most part are forgotten, as "the Scotchman abroad" is forgotten. But there had come a Macdonald to offer his person and his sword to John Duke of Burgundy, and he swashbucklered into a public-house, and quarrelled with a Frenchman; and Gil Macdonald knew the use of the claymore better than the Andrea Ferrara, and the Frenchman killed our bonny Gil; and they buried our bonny Gil: so his mother, in the shadow of Schiehallion, never saw him any more. They thought there was an end and finish of Gil Macdonald, who came, as they believed, from Sweden; but when the priest had said his say, and the turf was patted down carefully, there remained sitting at the grave's head a little grey dog.

No one noticed the little grey dog at all. It was a very humble little dog. Dandy Dinmont, of Charlie's Hope, was not to be born for four hundred years. Yet here sat a little Scotch Dandy at the head of the grave of a Macdonald.

The little dog, like all Scotch dogs, and Scotch men, had not only a true heart, but a keen brain. It thought a great deal about the matter, and then it came to the conclusion that its master was dead, and that it must shift for itself. So it went back into the city of Ghent, from the glaciis where its master, poor Gil Macdonald, was buried.

The town was very strange to it, for Gil, glorious lad, was very

quarrelsome, and an ill swordsman. His career had been very short. The dog did not know towns; he was from Fortingal, at the end of Glen Lyon, and was in reality brought up by that most unfortunate clan, so dear to every English schoolboy, the Macgregors. I could show how he came into the hands of a Macdonald, if I chose. The situation is the main point. At the beginning of the fifteenth century there was a little Scotch terrier in Ghent, whose master had been killed in a duel.

What was that little dog to do? It did not know any more than I do. It went back to the town, like Chatterton, but it was utterly unsuccessful. Some said that it was not a dog at all, for who had ever seen a dog like that? Some said that it *was* a dog, but an amorphous and improbable dog, and must be put to death. This we all know is a very dangerous argument against any dog, human or other; so the boys took the matter up with their usual good sense, and pelted the dog, because, as they argued, the dog was improbable. Scotch terriers are better known now.

The town was no success for the little grey dog, whose masters have done much of the noblest share in conquering the earth. The unlucky little brute thought that it would find its way back to its dead master's head, at the grave on the glaxis, and die there. The dog's intentions were no worse than these.

But John of Burgundy was building on to his palace, and there were some broken stones lying about, and the little dog had to pass the place; and the Cimbrian youth considered that a Celtic dog was improbable, therefore impossible, therefore to be destroyed. So they pelted stones at it, and one more dexterous than the others cut its head open.

Our little grey Macdonald dog ran swiftly and avoided being killed. What goes on in a dog's head is more than my knowledge can tell, but it got free from the suburbs, and crept along under a wall towards the glaxis. It said to itself, I think, "Why are men angry with *me*?" And behold, as it said so, while it was crouching under the wall, there came towards it a man and a woman in furious anger. The little grey dog lay down and prepared for death.

"Priscilla," said Father Peter, furiously, "I tell you to leave it to God."

"We are instruments in the hands of God," said Sister Priscilla.

"Have you no mercy, no patience?"

"None; Van Dysart must die."

"Hush!" said Father Peter. "Here is one who wants our mercy more than Van Dysart, Priscilla; this is the dog of the Swede who was killed yesterday by Burgundy's groom. I want something to love, Priscilla; I will love this. I am sick of all

this hate. I will do what is agreed about the man, but I will love the little dog."

The little Scotch dog had given itself up by now. It would have preferred to die at its master's grave (for, like all good Scotchmen, it was in the matter of sentimentality an idiot), but it was quite ready to be killed by the infuriated priest or the infuriated nun. It propped against the wall and wagged feebly; whereupon the nun burst into a furious passion of tears, and cried "Misericordia! misericordia!"

"Let us take it to Margaret," said Father Peter. And the nun took possession of the person of that little Scotch dog, and carried it to the studio of the Van Eycks.

CHAPTER X.

"Who comes here?" said John Van Eyck, putting his palette beside him. "A nun and a priest: do not tell me that it is Father Peter and Sister Priscilla. Margaret! Margaret! here are our friends. My feeble souls! how are you getting through this wicked world?"

"As all feeble souls should—by taking something more feeble than ourselves under our protection," said Sister Priscilla. "It was Martina yesterday; it is a little Scythian dog to-day. Here it is. Look at it, you Van Eyck, and paint *pity*!"

She put down the little Scotch dog before him, and the dog, thinking that this was the place of execution, propped up against some armour, and wagged its tail. It was such a very poor little dog, and its head was cut open and bleeding. Hubert Van Eyck said, "Be quiet!" very sharply, and then bent down his grand face toward the face of the little dog.

"Margaret, come here."

Margaret was behind him, and had her arm round his neck in an instant, frowning at the others to be silent.

"Oh, Margaret, Margaret, did you ever see anything like this? So far from its old home, and without one solitary friend!"

"One of *your* master Burgundy's grooms killed *its* master in a duel yesterday," struck in Sister Priscilla. "We know that much, because the dog's master, who was from Tartary, spoke French—and Peter can speak French, and spoke to him about religion, and the young man was a good Catholic. He was a

handsome young man, and came from among mountains, but said that he was not a Swiss. Well. Will you be kind to the dog if we leave him here?"

Hubert and Margaret Van Eyck were down before the dog, when a very quiet voice said, behind them all—

"The dog is safe to get good treatment here; but he will run away, I fear. Let him follow you two among the people. It will be better in the end, *I* know."

If she did not, who did? for the woman who spoke was Martina.

She was amazingly beautiful, but not with the beauty of the ideal Magdalen, or with the beauty of the Fornarina. Of the splendour of her beauty there was no doubt; in colour, complexion, form of face, majestic carriage of head, there was nothing left to be desired; yet it was a little marred in three ways. In the first place, the mouth was rather too large, too powerful, and, if we dare say it, too sensuous. In the second place, above her really grand and tender eyes, and above her grand mask, there loomed an awful black thunder-cloud of black eyebrow, which had lightning and fury in it. There was a horrible potential wrath under those terrible black eyebrows, which boded no good to some one. A man had better meet a bear deprived of her cubs than this woman, *if he had made her hate him*. The woman's face was a thunder-cloud; but just now that face was floating in the peaceful summer air which Hubert and Margaret Van Eyck carried with them everywhere in their goodness.

The third fault in her beauty was this: Margaret had got her to take the simple and temporary vows of the Order of the Magdalen Sub Crucem, which involved an attention to religious duties, abstinence from sin, good works among the poor, a quiet dress, not specified, and the wearing of the hair cut perfectly short close to the head. It was in consequence of this last rule, of cutting away the hair, that you could see that the woman's head had far more at the back of it than an English gentleman would care to see at the back of *his* wife's head. There was power, certainly; but there was also sensuality. A man who was inclined to marry a woman with those eyebrows, that mouth, and that back to her head, would in these scientific times, were he well educated, ask himself, whether he would prefer blowing his brains out before the ceremony, or after. If he was going to make such a fool of himself at all, he would very likely say before.

But she was as charming as Cleopatra. She was one of those women who madden fools. It is no use mincing matters in any way. History tells us most emphatically that these women have,

more often than not, very tender and kind hearts. Generally I think they have a very small capacity for hatred and revenge. Now this woman had.

To those who had a chance of being her masters, this woman, Martina, could be dangerous; to those who would submit, she would be kind. We can go no further now. People recognised matters in those days which we are not allowed to speak of now. Margaret Van Eyck had taken Martina in. Margaret had submitted to her, as she did to every one else, and Martina the suspected sinner was the mistress in one way of Margaret the saint.

Martina the Cabarus of Ghent, was dressed rather remarkably, because she had been "sitting" for Hubert and for Margaret. She was draped in a sheet of dove-coloured satin, to see how she would do for the Queen of Sheba (young John Van Eyck said she would never do for it, and she did not). She shoved from her shoulders the dove-coloured satin, and sat down on the floor before the little Scotch dog.

The dog did all it knew how to do. It propped up and wagged feebly. The little dog thought that it was to be put to death.

"Little dog from Scythia," said Martina, lowering her black eyebrows as a thunder-cloud lowers over Schiehallion, "will you take the advice of a madwoman?"

The little dog did not know what to say.

It was a far cry to Ben Lawers. It wagged again weakly.

"You will, then," said Martina, in Gaelic, "take the advice of a clanswoman, and get back to Glenlyon. It may be bad there, but it is worse here. You cannot cross the sea, nor can I. They call me Martina here, little dog, but in the shadow of Schiehallion there are some now who would call me Macdonald. Scotch can be of any nation, as they choose; but, little dog, if you are wise, like our people, get away home out of this hell. If you cannot, go about with Priscilla and Peter. As for me, I shall never get out of it—never more, never more, save when I get into the other hell."

Margaret had her arm round her neck now. "Do you wish to go from us?" she said.

"Yes," said Martina, sharply. "I am a Highland woman; that dog is a Highland dog. I want out. I want Schiehallion."

"How was I to know this, my dear?" said Margaret.

"You might have known it yesterday, when Gil Macdonald was killed, when I cast myself howling about the room. If you knew anything you might have known that I was a Highland woman. And those two bring his dog here to mind me of the old feud

between us—you miserable Flemings, lying down like dogs under Burgundy's heel. I tell you that you are frogs and we are eagles."

"My dear," said Margaret Van Eyck, "you rave."

"Highlanders do generally," she replied, raging; "but the lad Macdonald who was killed was to have been married to me in the old country. That is his little dog. I have no more to say. I would rather that the little dog went with Father Peter and Sister Priscilla than with me. I am not worthy of it. The dog has smelt the heather, and so has loved the people; I am unworthy of it. Let the dog go with them."

"Then you are not wild any longer?" said Hubert, kindly. "We have tried to do our best by you."

"All the blessings of the God of love rest on you two Flemings," was the answer. "But I am a Macdonald. I should have told it you before, I doubt, but I did not like, lest you should turn me out, and I am half a Macgregor."

"A Macgregor!" said Hubert, thinking that she meant some very secret and dangerous society. "What is a Macgregor?"

"Scaith to the bride, blood to the bridegroom of the Mac-cullums; death in castles, fire in the town to the Macdonalds; and hell's deep hell to the Donnachies: mother and child, bride and bridegroom all together! That's the meaning of a Macgregor."

Hubert Van Eyck found that he had struck on a well somewhat deeper than he had thought. "And where do all these people come from?" he asked.

"Scotland," she said.

"And where is that?" said Hubert, who did not know. How many people could have mapped the centre of Africa five years ago? (who can do it now?)

"It is beyond the river of death," said the unhappy woman; "but I was there once, and no Fleming will win there either before death or after. I ask you only, sir, about the little dog. Let him go with that nun and that priest. Scotch folks love the people, and if they do not corrupt the dog she will not corrupt them."

And John Van Eyck, who had been listening, told his brother ten minutes after that this sort of thing would not do. Margaret had taken in a woman who was not only disreputable in life, but was a power among the radicals. And Hubert was notoriously encouraging Peter and Priscilla, open radicals. In short, John, like a young prig as he was (though he could paint), told Hubert that it wouldn't do and that the Court didn't like it. Whereupon Hubert laughed his brave old laugh at John, and Margaret, who

had heard the argument, looked at Marie, until Marie began crying, which is about as much as she ever did.

Yet she and John did well for a time. I wonder whether Marie Van Eyck ever cried over the lottery-ticket business when they were all dead save her? I *believe* she lost her temper; but on this matter history, as far as I can get at it, is perfectly silent.

One only lives for the purpose of giving advice to one's neighbours, and I am going to give a little piece of advice to the wives of artists. My dear madam, if you are such a miserable little prig (of course you are not) as the wife of John Van Eyck, *do not allow your husband to paint your portrait*. The younger of these Van Eycks has done a most terrible and shameful thing. He has painted the wife of his bosom as she was in the flesh. Fancy being tied to that woman for life!

Not being Irish or Corsican we object strongly to righting our innumerable wrongs by assassination. If it was excusable in any case, it would be excusable in the case of Marie Van Eyck. She must have been an awful little woman. She on the present occasion would not come back into the studio until "that woman," meaning "the Macdonald," was gone. Then she came in and made herself disagreeable to Hubert and Margaret, who worshipped her. She was very tiny, very selfish, and very disagreeable; but folks married young in those days, and a bride is a bride until all chivalry and manhood is gone from the world.

CHAPTER XI.

YOUNG Philippe le Bon of Burgundy thought that he would fall in love with Marie Van Eyck at this time, and as he generally did what he liked, he did that. He fell out again in a fortnight—not merely fell out of love, but fell out with the object of his affections, Marie Van Eyck, the bride of John. Burgundy was a fool for his pains; if he had desired to get a reputation for gallantry he should not have selected such a sour-faced little pepper-box as that. She would not stand him at all. She never to the last knew anything about his objects. She was convent-bred, and so perfectly ignorant of the wickedness of this world. She was most perfectly spotless and religious, yet if she had ever known that young Philip entertained the idea of

putting himself in her husband's place, I really doubt whether or no she would not, in spite of her religion, have—we do not like to say the words, but—well—put a knife into his heart. She was the most ferociously virtuous little woman.

But she was more. She was a narrow and rather violent little woman, who was brought up on the narrow-gauge system, and would, had she lived in these days, have applied the same language to the Great Western Railway as the old Pope at Rome applied to the great Montalembert. But she would have stuck to her point also, which is more than the Pope did. Again, she was a precise little woman who spoke her mind, and she didn't like Philippe le Bon, and she told him so. In fact he grew rather warm in his attentions, and wanted to take her hand, and she told him that he was a tipsy young vagabond. She did *not* box his ears. It was a calumny of Van Dysart's, who hated the young Burgundy, as well as he served the old. Philip carried his plaint to Hubert, who quietly asked what he meant by making love to other men's wives, which presented the matter in a new light to young Burgundy, and to use a vulgarism, "shut him up."

That fellow Philippe le Bon had a good deal of ill-directed power. I think it is useless to deny that. But his power could be directed by clever people for their own objects. I hate to hear a Sovereign called "the Good." They tried to lay that title on to the late Prince Albert: his memory was too grand to hold it, and we have dropped it. A man who is called "the Good" is nearly certain to have done nothing at the time when he had to act.

This short *tendresse* with John Van Eyck's wife prevented Philip of Burgundy from going to his Club much. Princes were members of Clubs then as they are now. If he had heard some Club-gossip just then he would have heard something to his very great advantage. He did not, and his pages were not likely to tell him.

Just now that section of society which some folks (heaven knows why) call the people; others (heaven only knows why) call the working class; others (nobody knows why) call the *jacquerie* or mob, were getting very dangerous. They had been Van Kenninging and they had been Van Dysarted. *They* said a little too much. They wanted an advance of wages. Van Kenning had been with them with his figures and had proved to them that it was impossible for them to have it, and they gave him the respectful answer that they were going to have it. Van Dysart had told them that they were quite in the right, whereupon they

requested him to "lead on." And as "leading on" meant an instant collision with Burgundy's mercenaries, Van Dysart pleaded an engagement. The factory hands were terribly numerous, and were getting very dangerous; for you must remember that there were few cannon on the earth in those days. Young Philip, who had wits, might have known this, but he was always in the wrong place. He was now trying to make love to John Van Eyck's wife, who did *not* box his ears. As for John, reigning Duke, he was at Paris. France! France! it was in those times that you lost the frontier of the Rhine, never to be regained; you will be France to your death now, and nothing more.

In these times, in some of these years, Van Kenning thought he would go out for a walk in the morning; and he put on his morning suit of maroon velvet, with crimson satin slashings, and his very newest pair of dove-coloured stockings, which covering his leg up to his middle thigh, showed off that very handsome leg most beautifully. Van Kenning was most particular about his stockings.

And no sooner was he in the street than a little grey dog came up and jumped up against them. It would have exasperated a saint, if saints wore silk stockings, which some say they do not.

Van Kenning was furious; he went to the length of shaking his gloves (which he had not yet put on) at that little dog. And he used atrocious language to that little dog. He said, "You very naughty little dog, you should not have done this evil thing to my silk stockings." And the little grey dog was very sorry, and it went and propped up humbly against something. And Van Kenning thought it was a new black pump which the dog had propped up against, but looking a second time he saw that it was not a pump at all, but a nun.

"Halloa!" he said. "Is that you, you old lunatic?"

"I would sooner be a lunatic than an idiot. Here, Van Kenning," said Sister Priscilla. "Let us give up breaking shafts like wags and fools. The people will be up in earnest to-night or to-morrow. Go and see what you can do. I don't want it yet."

"I thought you did," said Van Kenning.

"Not yet, not yet. His time is not come. Revenge would not be sweet yet."

They looked in one another's eyes for just one second: but they understood one another.

"Spada and *he* are round the corner now," she said. "Will you see them first, or go to the heads of the trades first?"

"Why not make a smash at once?" said Van Kenning, brushing his silk stockings with his glove. "It must come to a smash between the trades unions and the nobility soon. Why not now?"

"The people are not ready."

"You mean that you have pity. You must have no pity."

"I have none for him. But I have for others."

"What fools you women are! Well, and what do you want me to do?"

"Get wages raised, you can do that; and leave him alone just now."

"Why?" said Van Kenning. "Will a woman ever give her reasons?"

"Because Margaret wishes it."

"She asked for vengeance."

"Well, then, because I am not sure of Martina. She loves the man still."

CHAPTER XII.

I AM sorry to have to write down the next sentence; but really and truly Van Kenning, as he walked towards the residence of a certain man, uttered the following remarkable opinion:—

"Botheration take all these women, body and bones!"

It is an awful thing to write down, of course; but he continued soliloquising, which may give us a clue to his atrocious exclamation. I am so little of a scholar myself, that I do not know the Dutch for "botheration"; in fact, I believe that we are indebted to the Sister Island for the very word itself; but he *said* it, or words to that effect. I believe that he used even a worse expression than even "botheration." My male friends have advised me, in confidence, that they have often used strong language with regard to that singular habit of the female mind of requiring absolute mastery in all matters. Van Kenning used to say, that a woman would never be anything except a slave or a master.

"It is as near true as anything else," he said. "Women are as clever and as good as men; but they have that hungering for power which makes it impossible to make *friends* with them."

And the oddest thing in the world is that Geoffrey Chaucer was of the same opinion.

"I am going to do that lunatic nun's bidding," he went on, "because I shall offend Margaret if I don't. These women force one on to discount one's position. They will not wait; they will have it all at once, even when they could get more by waiting. This nun, however, is lying; she lied in the most monstrous way. I cannot think why she wants me to put a stop to a *jacquerie* just at the time when Burgundy is not ready. Yet I, like an old idiot, am going to do that same. Where the devil did she get that little dog from? Well, well; it is no use talking nonsense. Margaret wishes it, and Margaret shall have it. But no mercy to Van Dysart. Oh, you hound! If all the others fall off from the quest of your ruin, I will remain true. I wish I could get that little grey dog from that mad nun. There was a little girl once, an innkeeper's daughter, at Flushing, and I wanted to marry her; but my father would not let me. And she had a wistful patient face like that little dog. I wonder if she will give me that little dog; for I have but little in the world."

So thinking, he strode into the counting-house of the greatest merchant in the Netherlands, Van Helmont; not he of the incubus and succubus, but a member of the family, who had, I think, more sensibly taken to trading instead of writing illimitable balderdash.

"Van Helmont," said Van Kenning, "my time is rather short, but I have something important to say to you."

Van Helmont shoved his black cap from off his forehead, and scratched his head—his head was that of a very square-headed Dutchman—and he said not one solitary word. Van Kenning had come there to say something to him, and no gentleman is ever so rude as to interrupt another.

"Van Helmont," said Van Kenning, "I have been among the workmen."

"You?" said Van Helmont; "and what do they say?"

"Twenty-five per cent. increase in wages," replied Van Kenning.

"The Duke's troops are in France, I believe," said the practical Van Helmont.

"Mainly," replied Van Kenning. "But it is not a question of troops, it is a question of fact, my dear friend. What are you masters going to do?"

"Hold out," said Van Helmont.

"I don't see how you can. I really, as a practical man, cannot see how you can do it. You know best, of course. You know that many of you are netting nearly cent. per cent."

"We are doing pretty well," said Van Helmont; "but the capital and risk are ours, you know. I don't go among the workmen. Have you any power to make a proposal?"

"None. But from my experience I should say that matters lie between an increase of twenty-five per cent. or a *jacquerie*."

"Exactly," said Van Helmont. "I will see to it. I shall try ten per cent. first, but you know the trade. I'll see to it. But, Van Kenning, use your influence to keep that Scythian woman Martina with these pestilent folks the Van Eycks. If she gets free again, the devil had better be loose."

"Why?"

"Well," said Van Helmont, "you ought to know as well as I; you are tradesmaster. But if you don't know that a handsome woman, with her hair down her back, and a good grievance, howling, won't send our fellows wild, you had better go back to the counter."

"I see," said Van Kenning. And so he did.

And walking towards his Club, he once more uttered that atrocious sentiment with regard to women which we have printed above.

CHAPTER XIII.

SPADA and Van Dysart found a very congenial occupation: they gambled at cards night and day. They also drank pretty freely, although neither of them got any way drunk. About four hours in the day they left off their gambling and went down and fenced for an hour most vigorously. Spada, notoriously the best swordsman in Europe, was beaten as often as was safe and decent at the fencing. As to the gambling, he lost large sums to Van Dysart. Van Dysart began to depise the great Italian bully and gamester, and Spada began to curse his luck. One night, after losing nearly one thousand crowns, he got frantic, rubbed his short-cut hair wildly, and openly cursed Van Dysart to his face. We decline to give his oaths, but they were given with Italian emphasis.

"I wish I had never seen you," he said to Van Dysart. "I wish that your mother had died in childbed before your ill-starred face ever saw the sun. I have played and fought my way from Naples up to your cursed Ghent, and it is rather hard for a man of my reputation to be picked up by a miserable Fleming like yourself, and cast aside like a stale tunny."

"Do you wish to quarrel with me?" said Van Dysart.

"I am afraid," said Spada, "I am afraid of your sword; you fence too well for me. I think I could kill you, but I am not sure; you are by no means a man I would care to face in anger. I hate you naturally, for you have won my money; but I am a little afraid of you. I never feared any man before, but I fear you. If we ever come to a fight, and you kill me, I hope that you will have the honesty to tell the truth."

"And what is that, sir?"

"That I taught you how to kill me, and that you killed me according to my directions," said Spada. "You see that I never calculated on getting such a pupil. I hate you, as I have told you before, and I would have seen you"—never mind his expletives—"before I would have taught you my tricks, if I had known that you would have been such a splendid pupil. As it is, we must remain as we are. We shall fight some day, and you will kill me. You have won my money, and I must go and earn other money."

"You do not say that I have played unfairly?" said Van Dysart.

"If I had caught you doing so, I would have had you out into the street and have made you fight in two minutes," said Spada. "You have played fairly enough; but you have won my money. A man once won all my money and left me a beggar at Prague: I could not get back my money, but I could kill my man. I was not afraid of him, but I am of you. I spilt a glass of wine in his lap as I was paying him his money, and he did exactly what I wanted him to do, he resented it. I had my sword through his heart at five o'clock the next morning. I could not get back my money, but I could kill him, and so the money was no use to him in any way. I would kill you if I could, only I hate you so deeply for winning my money, that I would not even leave you with the reputation of beating the best swordsman in Europe."

"You are an honest man, and a good swordsman," said Van Dysart, who was a little drunk. "I don't want your swordsmanship impugned in any way whatever. I'll fight any man who says that you are not the second swordsman in Europe, and I will fight any man who says that I am not the first. Let us have another bottle of wine."

"Not on my account, I beg," said Spada.

"No—winners pay," said Van Dysart. "*I'll pay.*"

Spada drummed on the table, and the wine was brought and poured into a silver tankard. Spada, with an anxious face, counted out small silver coins on the table.

"Winner drinks first," said Van Dysart. "Here is to Burgundy!"

"Which Burgundy?" asked Spada.

"John of Burgundy, you ass," said Van Dysart. "He has virtues, for I am virtuous when I am kept from cards and women."

If he could have seen the flash of fury in the face of the Italian when he uttered the word "ass," he might have seen something which it would have been good for him to see.

"I will drink to John of Burgundy," said Spada, a man who never exceeded. "Are not you rather drunk?"

"I believe that I am: take me to bed."

There was really nothing offensive in this request; in fact we have heard of drunken gentlemen being put to bed by other gentlemen far later in history than the time to which we refer. Spada got Van Dysart to bed with singular rapidity and dexterity; he had probably done the same thing once or twice before.

In those times every one slept naked. Spada stripped Van Dysart, and got him on to the bed of the inn in which they had been gambling. Spada, an old hand at this sort of work, would have liked to see Van Dysart between the blankets, that he might have been more quiet; but when Spada had got him naked, Van Dysart got petulant, and Spada let him lie on the bed as he was.

On the bed was a naked man in a drunken sleep. Spada himself, hound as he was, confessed that he was worthy of having a sword sent through his ribs. One leg hung down beside the bedstead, the other lay under him. There lay the man on the bed in the magnificence of his beauty, without his clothes, without even his very shirt, for Spada had taken care of that detail. Beside the bed, writing at a desk, sat the inexorable Spada, with the naked man's clothes beside him, making *précis* of every letter in every pocket. The naked man never moved; and as Spada went on at his awful *précis* work, he began to get into his head that he was doing a rather awful business.

For every letter which he got hold of for the Duke of Burgundy meant death, or worse than death. Van Dysart, sleeping naked on the bed, was pledged by these letters to a course of politics which we can only describe as being milder than Fenianism. From the letters which Spada got and put in *précis*, Van Dysart's ruin was perfectly safe. Spada had been hired by the Duke of Burgundy to effect Van Dysart's ruin, and by getting the man drunk, and putting him to bed naked, he had his business well in hand. There was enough in the poor young man's pockets to

condemn him seven times over. He was a political fool, whereas John of Burgundy had brains. It was a mere case of Whig against Prince, and we shall see who won.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE case against Van Dysart was utterly and entirely hopeless. The quarrel between the house of Burgundy and the Gilden was at that time a very heavy one, and the mercy of the house of Burgundy was very small. Spada had done much dirty work in his life, and really did not consider this job a peculiarly dirty one : he was hired to do it ; and his man was stripped and drunk on the bed—yet the rascal hesitated. The rascal felt pity, the man was so utterly at his mercy : Spada had needed mercy more than once, and he felt pity now.

From every pocket came the damning documents. Van Dysart had been elected as “head centre” to every revolutionary society in Belgium. His Honour Beales, M.A., Professor Beesley, and Mr. Bradlaugh, were distinctly objected to in certain quarters in our own day ; but Van Dysart had gone before any of them by hundreds of miles. To talk Reform in those days was death by the hand of Burgundy. Spada turned towards the bed ; the great white chest was quietly heaving now, and Spada said, “I think I can save you, lad. I think you stand well with the priests ; but I do what I am paid to do. I will ruin you, but I will try for your life. Ravenna was a nasty hole, but these Flemings are dirtier dogs than we and have not our genius. I shall go to Paris.”

And he went on with his work, putting back the papers of the drunken man just as he found them into the pockets of his clothes—exactly as he found them. “No one,” he said to himself, “ever trusted *one* person with a conspiracy. I am too notorious a scoundrel. This fellow is an awful scoundrel, but I think I can save his head. I have a fellow-feeling for him.”

Précis Number Five : “Van Dysart has been elected head manager of the Woolcombers’ trade association.” Number Six : “Has accepted that office with many congratulations.” That would be enough to damn a penniless dog like me, but I will get him through all this. Burgundy is afraid of him, and the priests are for Reform. I will go to the mad priest Peter—or, no, I will

speak to Van Kenning. I will think what I will do. *Quiet.* Let me think."

Van Dysart had moved on the bed while Spada was busy with his papers. This was very dangerous, but Spada was up to the occasion.

"You fool," he said, "why can't you take your drink like a man? You are lying stark naked there after having fought me about putting you between the blankets."

"Where are my clothes?" said Van Dysart.

"Just where I threw them down when I stripped you," said Spada.

"Give me my shirt," said Van Dysart.

Spada gave it to him at once, but his eyes were starting out of his head. He had enough to ruin the man already, and did not care. It is probable that he would never have thought of looking at the man's shirt at all if he had not asked for it. He, however, gave Van Dysart his shirt at once, and Van Dysart rolled over on to it, keeping it under his breast. Spada knew that there was something left which he must know, and he puzzled how to get it.

He knew that the liquor would die out of the man soon, and that he would become keenly sensible and fractious. There was wine in the room, and looking at it he took his course. He filled a large glass with white Burgundy, and approached the sleeper; knowing that white Burgundy is one of the most dangerous wines in existence, he went to the bedside of the sleeping man, and slopped some of it over his head.

"What is the matter now?" said the scrupulous Van Dysart.

"I have been sitting up drinking, and I have got drunk," said Spada. "I am coming to bed."

"Well, go to your own bed, and don't come plaguing here," said Van Dysart. "How dare you come into bed with a gentleman?"

"I want to sleep somewhere. Manners are different in different countries. Have some of this."

Van Dysart raised himself up and drank a draught of the white Burgundy, and then he went to sleep again, but without his shirt. Late at night Spada thought he might be cold, so he put his shirt back and put a blanket over him.

When Van Dysart woke in the morning and cried for Cicely Hackett, he found his shirt where he had put it, and found a blanket over him. He asked Cicely Hackett if she had put the blanket over him, but she repudiated the idea with scorn, and said that the Italian gentleman must have done it, she supposed.

Van Dysart was obliged to confess to himself that it was very civil on the part of Spada.

CHAPTER XV.

It was certainly cool on the part of Spada to make Van Dysart drunk, and to make a *précis* of his papers for the inspection of the Duke of Burgundy and John Van Eyck. Spada said to himself that he would save the man as a brother rascal. Spada thought that the man was merely associated with the Radicals, as many priests were; indeed, to tell the whole truth, as *most* priests were.

Spada thought that this man, Van Dysart, whom he had been set to ruin, would be imprisoned for a few years, and then set free for further, and to him congenial rascalities. He thought that he could save his head until he got hold of his shirt, and when he saw what the man carried in the bosom of his shirt, tied up in a sealskin cover, he was fairly puzzled as to the means for saving his brother rascal.

If Van Dysart had gone honestly among the working class, he might have got through with his head on his shoulders. If he had gone in with the secular clergy, who were then, as they have generally been, on the side of the people, he might have done well. But he was a man who would do nothing, and take no side heartily. What Spada found in the bosom of his shirt was an acknowledgment of the fact that he was the seducer of Martina, which would put him all wrong with the workmen; and next, his certificate as one of the Illuminati, which would utterly ruin him with the priests. It seemed utterly impossible for him to save the man now. Spada was a dog and a bully, but he was paid, and he must earn his money. It seemed to him that he could have saved his man, if his man had left any loophole. But his man was drunk on the bed; and Spada must give an account to the Duke that night.

He wanted to save his man, for scoundrels and convicts have a fellow-feeling; and he was thinking in the street of what he should do.

He was in a fearful temper, and a little grey dog began leaping on him. He kicked and cursed that little grey dog, and then he saw that the three awful figures sitting in a doorway close to him were the proprietors, or at least the abettors, of that little dog. The person who sat nearest to him had lace over her head, but no gaudry. Next to her sat a regular priest in grey, with his head

uncovered ; beyond him was a nun in black, of secular order, dark as death.

We are unable to say what Spada said. We will produce it in our own way. "Lorette, Monk, and Nun. After that, the Devil." The Italian bully was afraid of these three ; he wished that he had not kicked their dog. He has regretted the kicking of that little dog since. If you want to kick a dog, don't kick a Scotch dog to begin with. And whatever you do, do not kick a dog backed up as this dog was.

The priest spoke first. "Here," he said, "is the man of blood."

Spada said, "My good sir, my good sir."

Father Peter, having absolutely nothing practicable against Spada, went through the process, which I believe is called *de preciser votre accusation*—that is to say, he called him a "man of blood" once more.

Sister Priscilla was not going to have her wicket bowled down like this. She wanted to know why he had kicked her dog.

Spada instantly explained that it was not their dog at all. It was the dog of Fraulein Macdonald, if it was any one's dog. He (Spada) had an objection to law on many grounds. He had been bothered by the law himself. If there was any law about the dog, it was Fraulein Macdonald's dog.

"I am Lady Van Dysart," said the unhappy Martina.

"The day you prove yourself so, Fraulein Macdonald, I will be glad. Why are you sitting there in such company?"

"We have a common object," said Priscilla.

"I think you are mistaken," said Spada. "Shall I tell her all, Sister Priscilla?"

"That very much depends on what you have to tell."

"He is lying drunk on my bed now," said Spada.

"Come away here," said Sister Priscilla, rising. "Come away with me."

"Go not with the man of blood, Sister," cried Father Peter.

"You old fool, who is likely to trouble me?" said Sister Priscilla, losing her temper with remarkable rapidity. "And if any one did meddle with me, even you cannot deny that I am old enough and ugly enough to take care of myself."

"He is in the pay of Burgundy ; he is a traitor ; he goes about catching souls," cried Father Peter.

"Will you be quiet?" said Sister Priscilla, and indeed Father Peter was not quiet at all, but rambled on to poor Martina, who sat beside him, and with the usual tact of the regular clergy he

selected for his topic of conversation the illimitable wickedness of Van Dysart, which drove her half mad.

Meanwhile Sister Priscilla and Spada were talking together under an archway. Spada had begun the conversation by declining to speak, but standing and looking Sister Priscilla straight in the eyes. At last Sister Priscilla said, "Well?"

"I knew that I could make you speak first," said Spada. "You women are awful fools. Would you say what you said just now over again; it struck me as pointed."

"I only said 'Well,'" said Sister Priscilla.

"Yes; and do you see that I made you say it twice over? Nun, nun, we are on a very ugly business together. Can you hear me speak the truth for once, and can you understand the truth when you hear it?"

"If I can't understand the truth when I hear it," replied Sister Priscilla, "it will be waste of breath for you to tell it to me. Shall I call Peter?"

"No, a nun is bad enough, but a half-monk half-priest is worse, and a lady like her who is sitting beside Father Peter is worse than either of the others. I want to say a few words to you."

"I'll listen to you," said Sister Priscilla; "and as you look like a man, I'll heed you as far as I choose."

"If you were not devoted to a religious life I would marry you," said Spada.

"You would do nothing of the sort," said Sister Priscilla. "Two parties are required to every bargain, and in the old times I might have married hundreds of men."

"You refused them?"

"None of them ever asked me; they knew better. But if you are going to begin our present interview by making a fool of me — by asking an old nun to be your wife, I must take the liberty of telling you that I was not, at any period of my life, fool enough to think of marrying any man. I should say that marriage was an utter mistake; but you may rest assured that the very last person I should have selected, before my vows, would have been a rascally dicer and cut-throat like yourself."

"Those are hard words, mistress," said Spada, laughing.

"Well, they *are* too hard," said Sister Priscilla, laughing a hard dry laugh. "Our darling Leon, who is gone to heaven, was a dicer and a duellist. God rest his soul!"

"Who killed him? who broke Margaret's heart?" said Spada.

"We all know," said Priscilla. "It was Van Dysart."

"Shall I kill Van Dysart for you?"

"Yes."

"But the quarrel is none of mine. I could put my sword through him to-morrow; but the quarrel is none of mine."

"Will not Burgundy pay you?"

"The Duke is a very bad paymaster. I would rather get a better guarantee than the Duke's before I did such a thing. I am too well known in Europe. I want to ask you one thing, Sister Priscilla—have you no *pity* for the man?"

"Pity for the man who killed Leon!" she snarled out. "I have no pity for him: when I feel pity for the man who killed Margaret's lover, I hope I may be torn to pieces by wild horses."

Thought Spada, "I have begun at the wrong end. I did not know that women would take up one another's quarrels like this."

"She," broke out Sister Priscilla, "is more to me than all the world beside. And she wanted a lover, and she got one, as well she might, the bonny beauty; and Van Dysart killed him in the street, and I want to find a man who will kill Van Dysart. My pretty bird! think of her losing her lover like that. My pretty sweet!"

"And so on," interrupted Spada. "I frankly confess that I did not know how deeply you women get attached to one another. If there was any chance of knocking or, if necessary, kicking sense into the head of a nun, I should say that men occasionally get attached to other men quite as deeply as women get attached to women: there is the case of Jonathan and David to prove my words. But, Mrs. Nun, you must know some things, and this among others, you are the superior sex in every way—let that pass: but men in extreme circumstances can feel pity for other men. I am a very great scoundrel, so great a scoundrel that no city in Europe will be open to me soon. I live merely now by my valour and dexterity in the use of my sword. Yet I tell you, woman, that I feel pity, deep pity, for that young man who is now lying drunk and naked on my bed. Do you feel any?"

"None."

"Curse you women, you are more cruel than we are. Why do you feel no pity?"

"Because he killed Margaret's lover."

"Diantre!" said Spada, "what, in the name of the devil, is to be done here?"

"Nothing," said Sister Priscilla.

Spada set his teeth and began once more.

"Now, my good Sister Priscilla, listen to me. We are bound to hunt this man, Van Dysart, to death. I am (put me first) paid by the Duke of Burgundy to ruin the man. You see how I trust you. I want your assistance; will you give it to me?"

"Of course I will."

"Spoken truly and like yourself! Now we shall get on; now we shall get at results. What line do you propose?"

"I would burn him alive! He killed Leon."

"That is very true; but, at the same time, Leon tried to kill *him*. We will let that pass. As for burning him alive, I doubt very much whether we could manage that. The lad fights so very well that I should require a large sum down, and time to spend it, before I had him out. I *could* kill him, but I should have to go into sharp training first, and I do not care about that. I can win money from him when I choose; it has been my policy to lose to him. I want my money back before I kill him. Do you see?"

"No," said Sister Priscilla.

"I have about me documents which would ruin him," said Spada.

"Where are they?" said Sister Priscilla.

"In my hose," said Spada. "I see some of your trades union friends in the rear. Did you order them here?—because if you did, I have documents copied from Van Dysart's private papers which would enable me to have you hung in five minutes."

"Go off," said Sister Priscilla; and the half-dozen of blouses retreated at once.

"You have power, I see," said Spada; "well, so have I. I think you will act with me. I can either kill Van Dysart, or utterly ruin Van Dysart. I would rather ruin him. Which thing do you prefer?"

"Kill him! He killed Leon."

"That is all very well, and does honour to your heart, but does very little to your head. I have killed more men than I can remember with this old sword of mine, and hope to kill more; but I want to ruin this man, not kill him outright."

"Why?"

"Because I pity him; he is a fool, but he is a man, and I want to spare him."

"He killed Margaret's lover, and he ought to die," said Sister Priscilla. "We get no justice here, you dog of an Italian. You know *that*, if you know anything. I will not go with you in this matter. You are in the Duke's pay, and you wish that he should live to make peace between the Duke and the manufacturing hands."

"Stay a minute, you wild nun," said Spada. "I am a bad man; my mother broke her heart over me. I am in the pay of Burgundy, or why should I be here? I am all that is evil and bad; I give you all that; but why is it that I find you more pitiless

than myself? I do not profess religion—you do. Will you help me to save this unhappy dog?"

"No," said Priscilla; "he killed Leon, and Leon was Margaret's lover. You are a half-hearted man!"

So she departed, and Spada watched her fluttering in her nun's dress along the street; but he waited still, because he knew that he was between Martina and the home of the Van Eycks.

"I never could work on those women who have taken the vows," he said to himself. "I have tried it a hundred times, but I have always failed. The woman is at once a fool and no fool. She wants Van Dysart out of the way because he killed Leon; but she is more outrageously inclined for his death because he is deceiving the people and she is deceiving the people. All the devils in hell work at this business."

It was a quaint thing certainly; but it was hardly necessary on Spada's part to call for such a singular audience. The man whom we know as Philippe le Bon had got excessively drunk, and Van Kenning was taking him home to the palace. Van Kenning was, of course, perfectly sober; but Philip was horribly drunk, and was shouting politics to, as he thought, an empty street. Our scholarship does not enable us to give his French in the original—in fact, the oldest French we know habitually is that of Rabelais, so we must translate the language into plain English.

"Don't care a curse," said the prince; "don't care a hang—don't care the tenth part of a farthing's worth of a hang. The beggar thinks he is going to get the upper hand of my father and me with his trades unions. Now, you know—where are the beggars?"

"They are not here, my Lord," said Van Kenning.

Philippe le Bon propped himself up into an archway, and said—

"Van Kenning."

"My Lord."

"Where are they? Come, old man, you know where they are as well as another."

"If there is any *tapage nocturne* in the street, my Lord, I know where they will be soon. There is a man watching us now."

It was, in fact, our friend Spada, who came at once solemnly along the street, saluted Philip courteously, and passed into the next entry to hear what the prince and Van Kenning had been saying, though he might have saved himself the trouble, for Van Kenning told him everything.

"My Lord," said Van Kenning, "I must warn you that you are very drunk."

"Not more than another," said Philip, suddenly aroused. "I am no more drunk than yourself."

"Excuse my contradicting your Lordship, but you are more drunk than I ever was in my life, or ever mean to be."

"I must take care of this," said Philippe le Bon.

"I should recommend your Lordship to do so," said Van Kenning. In fact, Philip of Burgundy was no drunkard, and only had, in the language of Dandie Dinmont, "a screed of drink at an orra time." The unfortunate fact was that he was dreadfully drunk at this moment, and told everything to a listening Spada.

"You are a devilish good fellow, Van Kenning, said Philip. "I am obliged to you; and when a Duke of Burgundy is obliged to a man, he either gives him half what he is worth or hangs him. But I am not Duke of Burgundy yet, do you see? and so you are perfectly safe. Now to attend to business—for Princes must attend to business some time or another, the later the better—how's your mother?"

"I never had any mother," said Van Kenning, quietly.

"He never had any mother," said Philippe le Bon, sententiously. "You will mark that, because it is worthy of notice. I thought so from the very first. Van Kenning never had any mother. What a queer old stick she must have been! I remember her well; she was like him. I say, Van Kenning, some of the party are drunk, and it is not me. Turn the other fellows out. Where is Van Dysart?"

"Does your Lordship want him?"

"You fool, no; I am sick of him—the earth is sick of him; I'll have no more of him. Spada said that he would kill him for me; but Spada will do nothing until he is paid beforehand."

"Possibly, then, it would be better to pay Count Spada at once," said Van Kenning.

"I haven't got any—hic!—money," said Philip of Burgundy, "and if I had I should give it to—hic! She has been asking for money a long time now, and she should get some. What between one thing and another, Princes have harder times of it than you fellows. I can't find the ready cash to enable me to get rid of this Van Dysart. What a pity it is that you are not a gentleman, because, don't you see," said Philippe le Bon, with drunken gravity, "if you had been a gentleman, you would have had some fellow sufficiently attached to you to have cut Van Dysart's throat."

Van Kenning eyed Philippe le Bon with strong displeasure, and Spada listened more eagerly.

"My father says," continued Philippe le Bon, "that you agreed to ruin him. Why, in the name of Heaven! has it not been done? He can rouse the *jacquerie* on us at any time; and that fellow Spada has had a good deal of money from us, which he seems to have lost at backgammon with him. I wish Van Dysart was off the face of the earth."

"There are more of your Lordship's opinion," said Van Kenning, speaking loud enough for Spada to hear; "but pity is felt for him in some quarters."

"Where?" said Philippe le Bon.

"Among the women," said Van Kenning, talking loudly for the edification of Spada.

"The nun would have his heart out of his body," said Philip of Burgundy.

"I am not speaking of the nun," said Van Kenning.

"Anyhow it is very hard to keep a brutal hound like Spada for the mere purpose of assassinating a man, and not have it done after all. Spada has had awful sums of money to do it, and he hasn't done it: that is what I call dishonest. By heaven, I'll do it myself!"

"The trades would scarcely like that, my Lord," said Van Kenning.

"I'll burn Bruges before I am dead," said Philip; and in fact he did so. But he was now too drunk to be argued with, and Van Kenning had to hold out his hand to Spada, who was in the next doorway; and between them they got the Prince on his legs, and got him safe to the front door of the palace, under the trees.

Here was a difficulty. There was a crowd outside the door, the centre of which they could not see. It was an ugly business, the getting a decidedly drunk young prince of Burgundy through a crowd of exasperated "hands." Spada left Philip of Burgundy with Van Kenning, and pushed through the crowd. He was very soon back again.

"It is that woman," he said, in a whisper.

"What woman?" asked Van Kenning.

"Martina," said Spada. "She has gone mad again, and is beating at the door and demanding to see the Duke, and make him execute vengeance on Van Dysart for the murder of Leon."

"The devil!" said Van Kenning. "Let us get this drunken fool in by the postern here. Be quick, Spada, my good soul, if ever you were quick in your life!"

Spada had seen much of this work in his very eventful life, and young Philip was bundled in at a side-door without observation.

In five minutes the great door of the principal entrance was

thrown open, and there appeared to the crowd outside a great corridor, lined with solemn troops, and lit up with wax candles. Three men came down the steps towards the crowd; the Duke of Burgundy first and alone, and immediately after him Van Kenning and Spada.

The sight was very magnificent, for John of Burgundy had hurried on his royal clothes, and came step by step down among the people with an air of confidence, dressed in crimson velvet, and covered with jewels. You cannot see such a sight now. "Sartor Resartus" was not written then. The man's clothes and the man's awful power were enough for the crowd: they parted as though he wished to go through them.

His first intention, after he had seen his son brought in drunk by the back-stairs, had been to speak to them. He changed it now, and walked coolly through them: after which he walked coolly back again. All this time Spada and Van Kenning had grouped themselves on the steps in the blaze of light; the Duke John of Burgundy bowed right and left, and the crowd were saying one to the other how noble his Grace looked, when there was a very singular interruption.

A great light was shining down the steps out of the hall of the palace, and Van Kenning and Spada had grouped themselves carefully in front of that light, in their splendid dresses, looking at the crowd, Spada standing one step below Van Kenning. John of Burgundy, having been through the crowd, had turned at the bottom step, and had bent, speaking to some one there. Next, the crowd saw a tall woman, whom in the great blaze of light they did not recognise for their own Martina, take the Duke's arm and mount the steps with him, followed by a little dog. When fairly in the hall the Duke of Burgundy turned and bowed, with Martina on his arm and the little grey dog between his legs, Spada and Van Kenning to the right and the left of him. It was enough for them; they had had their *coup de théâtre* for nothing, and they went home to their beds when the doors were shut in their faces.

But behind the doors, where the brain of the people was, how was it there? Not quite so comfortable as it was outside. The Duke began at Martina first.

"I have got you now. You were for raising the mob on me."

"You have assassins enough in your pay to kill me, Burgundy, but the people are with me. If you order Spada to kill me he will do it, but it will go ill with Spada, and ill with you."

"Are you going to raise a *jacquerie* on me, woman?" said the Duke.

"If I had meant to do that I could have done it long ago."

"She speaks the truth there, my Lord," said Spada, roundly.

"He speaks the truth there, my Lord," said Van Kenning.

"I know he does," said the Duke. "You wretched Flemings! Any——" I regret to say that the exigencies of modern civilisation prevent my writing down the Duke of Burgundy's language. May I be permitted to go as far as to say that what he meant was this—that any indiscreet female and any indiscreet male, with physical courage and the gift of the gab, can lead a mob anywhere.

"Van Kenning and Spada, I thank you for bringing my drunken son home. You can go, and hold your tongues. Mistress, I am not so sure of you: you will stay here."

"It is an ill place, but I have stood in worse," said Martina the Scotchwoman. "I will stay here."

CHAPTER XVI.

WE leave to wiser and more learned men than ourselves to say how much gunpowder has had to do with the success and non-success of town insurrections. It is certain that in modern times, in crooked streets where artillery cannot act, gunpowder and barricades have given the mob a certain chance of winning. Yet in the old time, without gunpowder, street-fighting was considered extremely dangerous by good and excellent generals. The danger in it was that the heavy cavalry would be hampered and their horses killed, in which case their men would be caught overlaid with their armour. Every man knew the use of a pike or axe, and the fighting was done at close quarters. The mob were no less naturally brave than the men-at-arms, and fought with courage, and what is more, with desperation, knowing what would happen to them, their wives, and their houses if they lost. At Ghent even in these pre-reformation times the citizens and hands, the "Gilden," were laying the foundation of the "Dutch Republic," by teaching their brethren of the other towns that by good street-fighting they could in the end extract better terms from their rulers than they would otherwise have got. Street-fighting was by no means a thing to be despised. The towns were too crowded and too populous.

But the Duke of Burgundy wanted money, and he had a Cabinet Council, at which all our friends assembled at twelve

o'clock in the day in the palace at Ghent. It was extremely noticeable that no courtiers were present, but only the men who represented the people, and who were, one or two of them, rather supposed to favour the people a little too much.

Van Kenning was the first man who arrived and was shown into the Council Chamber, through the halberdiers, where he found himself alone for some little time. To him arrived, with the most tremendous formalities and presenting of arms, the Archbishop, who, when the door was shut, said—

"This is absolute madness!"

"What is he going to do?" said Van Kenning. "I have not heard. Why has he sent for *me*? There was an agreement that——"

"I know," said the Archbishop. "Hush!"

"You cannot know," said Van Kenning, testily; "no one heard it but himself and myself."

"He can keep nothing to himself," said the Archbishop. "If he had only told me I would not have cared, but he has told others. You and he made an arrangement that neither of you were to know anything about one another until you had ruined Van Dysart. That is true, is it not? Don't swear—it is bad manners."

But Van Kenning swore nevertheless.

"It is easy enough to talk about ruining Van Dysart," said the Archbishop; "but it is not quite so easy to do. I was bent on doing it, as far as a Churchman could, you know, but I am rather sick of the business. The elements seem to choke me every day for carrying on this feud: and this last madness of the Duke's will render it terribly difficult."

"What is it?" said Van Kenning.

"A tax on salt-fish," said the Archbishop.

"Why, the man is mad!" said Van Kenning.

"Assuredly; but he will have his way for all that, and we shall have all our throats cut. If Van Dysart heads the mob and Margaret Van Eyck cannot keep that lunatic Martina in, the mob will win. The Duke has not fifteen hundred men in the place."

"I believe that Martina the Scotchwoman has broken out again," said Van Kenning, and went on—

"Will she not turn against Van Dysart?"

The Archbishop shook his head.

"She loves him," he said, quietly. "She threatens him with death and fury, but when it comes to the point I would not trust her."

They were both silent for a time.

"When this Council is over, come with me to Margaret Van Eyck," said the Archbishop.

Van Kenning nodded. The door was opened, and a little Councillor of the town, in blue velvet, ran suddenly in; and seeing no one but the Archbishop and Van Kenning, stopped himself from making his obeisance to the throne, and coming quickly up to them, whispered—

"Strike, Archbishop, strike! My hands have given notice to leave work to-morrow, and I lose ten thousand."

"On what grounds have they struck?" said the Archbishop.

"This preposterous tax—this salt-fish tax."

"Then, it is known?"

"Did the Duke of Burgundy ever keep a secret? Van Dysart has sold us. It is fearfully serious," said the little Councillor.

"We shall have the people up," said the Archbishop.

"We shall, indeed," said the little Councillor. "Archbishop, do you know where Father Peter and Sister Priscilla are? It is more in your way than mine."

"No," said the Archbishop.

"Why, they are *missing*!" said the little Councillor.

"The—the—Saints protect us!" cried the Archbishop.

"Here is a fine to-do," said Van Kenning. "I shall be no use if those two lunatics are carrying the fiery cross round. Archbishop, you have let them go loose too long."

The Archbishop spoke out like a man—

"I meddle with no friends of those poor whom Christ has given me. Those two loved the poor in their way, and the poor loved them."

Van Kenning was intensely delighted at the Archbishop's reply; and the two old friends shook hands as honest fellows do when they have been on the verge of a difference.

"Now," said the Archbishop, smiling blandly on the Councillor, "have you any more good tidings for us?"

"Yes," said the Councillor; "Martina is not to be found. She is not at the Van Eycks."

"When did you ask?"

"An hour ago."

"Well, then," said Van Kenning, "I think we are safe in that quarter. She came into the palace last night; and if Margaret has seen nothing of her, she must have been here all night."

"Locked up?" said the little Councillor.

"Most unwelcome guests of the Duke, who stay all night, *are* locked up," said Van Kenning.

"If he puts her to death," said the Councillor, aghast, "we are all undone. I shall sell out, and go to England."

"I think that he only wants her kept in, and, in consequence, has not let her out," said Van Kenning.

The door leading behind the throne was thrown open, and the halberdiers came flashing and clattering on the dais, and forming on the steps of it, nearly a hundred strong, leaving an open space towards the throne. Then there was a pause and a dead silence. Then came a herald, who advanced to the bottom of the steps, and stood like a statue; then from above came two pages, in blue velvet, who put cushions at the feet of the throne, and sat on them: then there was dead silence again, only that Van Kenning whispered to the Archbishop, behind his hand—

"There are more expected surely, than we three? He would never have had all this tomfoolery for *us*."

The Archbishop said, "Hush; read the riddle for yourself. Do you see?"

Slowly through the open door came the Duke of Burgundy, flicking his face with a pocket handkerchief, with his arm round Van Dysart's neck.

Van Kenning was intensely amused.

"If he had done as much for me, I would have gone home and hung myself," he said to himself. "This is fine comedy, and that ass Van Dysart believes it to be real life."

But while jeering, he could not refuse a tribute of honest admiration to Van Dysart himself, as he left the Duke, and came flaunting down the steps of the dais towards them. Van Kenning bethought himself that once he had a brother, killed in France, as handsome as Van Dysart; yet he thought again that his brother could not have been so handsome, and his brother had never been so beautifully dressed.

When Van Dysart came down to Van Kenning, Van Kenning shook hands with him warmly; and Van Dysart said—

"Good-day, old Judas. I thought you were vowed to my death."

"You have found *that* out, have you?" said Van Kenning, coolly. "How many secrets have *you* trusted to the Duke?"

This was very easy to say, for the Duke had given orders that every one should leave the hall; and so the halberdiers went clanking out. A slight difficulty arose between the herald and the two pages with their cushions, as to who had right of going through the door first. It ended in something very like a free fight between the pages and the herald behind the back of the unconscious Duke, to the extreme confusion of the Archbishop.

He had just ascertained that the pages, by hard hammering about the herald's head with their cushions, had won, and had run away with his trumpet, when the doors were closed, and they were invited up on to the dais, to join the Council.

"I suppose, gentlemen," said the Duke, "that you have heard of my proposal to raise more money? I may shortly say that I propose to raise it by a tax on salt-fish. Archbishop, what do you say to it?"

"We shall have a riot," said the Archbishop.

"And put it down," said the Duke. "What do you say to it, Van Kenning?"

"I agree with the Archbishop," said Van Kenning. "But I would like news from——"

"That is my business," said the Duke, quickly. "What do you say to it, Councillor?"

"If it could possibly be avoided, my Lord Duke——" began the Councillor.

"It cannot," said the Duke. "What do you say, Van Dysart?"

"I think I can carry it through for you," said Van Dysart.

"I think you will be able. There are paper and pens there; just write down your demands for doing so, would you, and give them to me?"

For one instant there was a motion towards Van Dysart from Van Kenning's arm, as though he would have stopped him. But the Duke's eye was on him, and he saw that his bargain must be fulfilled. Van Dysart sat down and wrote out his own infamy and his own deliberate ruin. Fifty thousand crowns if he could persuade the people to submit to the tax; one hundred thousand if he could lead a sufficient number of them out into the town into the open where they could be attacked by cavalry. It was written, signed, and given to the Duke, who read it, nodded, and put it in his bosom. Then the conversation was resumed by the Duke.

"There is one more detail, Van Dysart, which I should wish for. You were the seducer of that petulant woman, Martina?"

"I fear that is true."

"I want to have her executed; she is a continual plague. That will make no difference in our bargain, I suppose?"

"Yes, that would make a great difference in our bargain," said Van Dysart. "I should want more money."

"Well, you will tell me the difference presently; at present we are agreed, and the Council dismissed. Van Dysart, come to my room in half an hour. I shall see you all to supper, gentlemen.

I need not tell you that this Council is perfectly secret, under pain of death."

They all four left by the door at the lower end of the room, and the Duke followed them to it. When their footsteps had died away, the Duke stood in the middle of the room, and said, quietly—

"Come out, you two."

And from behind the hangings on one side came Spada, and from behind the hangings on the other came Martina.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE Duke said, "Well!" but neither of the other two said anything at all, which was confusing. The Duke had to resume the conversation, and said to a woman who entered the room at that moment—

"We have got him now, Martina."

"I could have ruined him long ago," she said, "but I have held my hand. I can ruin him now with that paper which you have in your hand. You had better give it to me, and let me ruin him at once."

Spada was standing carefully behind her, and made a slight gesticulation of disapproval. The Duke of Burgundy gave her the paper on which Van Dysart's terms were written in his own hand, and laughed.

"Now, mistress, you have him in your hands," he said. "You can take your own course now, and can go. I have betrayed him to you, and I suppose you will act; you heard him say that your life is to be sought for the money to pay for his gambling debts; you have the power to ruin him, and you must certainly have the will. Now go, and do your duty."

And so Martina went, with the damning paper in her hand, straight to Margaret Van Eyck.

The Duke of Burgundy and Spada were left alone together.

"She is safe enough now, I think."

"Yes," said Spada; "safe enough to save Van Dysart."

"What do you mean?" said the Duke.

"I do not exactly know," said Spada. "I only know that you have done the worst thing you could possibly have done."

"Why?" said the Duke.

"Simply because the woman loves the man. The man has wronged her, and you have put all the power in the hands of the woman."

"But she will use it against him?" said the Duke of Burgundy.

"*She will use it for him, as sure as you are born,*" said Spada, quietly. "I know them."

"But why?" said the Duke, aghast.

"Because women are better than men, as I have known for some years," said this great rascal.

"You are mad, Spada," said the Duke.

"The first time the compliment was ever paid me," said Spada.

"You do not know your work, my Lord Duke of Burgundy. That paper should have been given to me, not to her."

"What would you have done with it?"

"I should first of all have demanded ten thousand pieces from him on the strength of having it in my possession; then I should have tried to get ten thousand pieces from you to get it back again. I suspect that if you had given that paper to me instead of to her, I should have been a rich man for life."

"You might have taken it, fool!"

"Not in Burgundy's palace. In a disreputable house the old woman is mistress, and her bullies are always ready."

"You are impudent!" said the Duke.

"I live by impudence," said Spada.

"Can you get it from her?"

"I could if I chose, but I do not choose."

"You dog! you would do anything for money."

"That is true," said Spada, quietly. "For money I would assassinate your Grace. I could quite reconcile that to my conscience; but the woman is gone. I am rather sick of your Court; I think that Van Dysart is a good fellow on the whole. You have not paid me as well as I expected, and so I will trouble you to give me those diamonds which you have on you, and which you put on for the purpose of dazzling the eyes of an old fox like Van Kenning. We are perfectly alone, my Lord; and if you dare to say 'Guard!' I will put young Philip on this rascally throne by killing you!"

"Will you listen to reason?" said the Duke, aghast.

"No, my Lord, on no account. I have listened to reason too long; and I have not made much money by it. I have always held my life in my hands, and I do not fear death in any way. I require you to give me those diamonds, and to go with me arm in arm to the end of the Judenstrasse. I have given you the best of my advice, and you have not paid for it as you should have. You

have ventured to compare your intellect—that of a mere Burgundian, as low as that of an Englishman—with the intellect of an Italian. You must suffer."

"Spada, you are a great scoundrel!"

"In that matter I have the honour of comparing unfavourably with your Grace! Come, man, enough of this fooling! Give me those diamonds or I will kill you, and go tell Philip. I am sick of this work; I want fighting, and am sick of an intrigue not fit for a gentleman. I pity the fellow, and I am a soldier."

The Duke looked at him very quietly.

"What," he said, "are your terms to go to Dendermond and bring in the troops?"

Spada sat down in a chair and thought, and the Duke went on—

"I see you are a tender-hearted ruffian; they told me that you had killed your own brother."

"A lie! He was fighting for Parma, I for Florence. He was killed by Marco Dandolo."

"That is very possible. I want to know your price for going to Dendermond and fetching in the troops?"

"A safe conduct," said Spada.

"Good."

"Those diamonds."

"Why the diamonds? I dislike to part with them."

"But I want them," said Spada. "I may have to fly if you fail, and I cannot fly laden with gold. I want the diamonds."

"It is annoying," said the Duke of Burgundy. "You seem to have no mercy. I wanted those diamonds particularly; they are a favourite set of mine—the last I bought. Will you take fifty thousand crowns instead?"

"Duke, you would have to leave the room to get the money. I have told you before that I will not let you leave the room alive without the diamonds. I will not willingly checkmate myself, for you could raise the guard on me. If you will give me those diamonds, and a free pass in your own hand to Dendermond, I will bring in your freelances in time, I give you my word."

"Well," said the Duke, "you live by your military honour, and if you deceive me your character is gone. I perfectly understand your motives in asking for the diamonds, because you know that you have to escape my vengeance after you have helped me to win, and will have to ride far and fast. Here, then, are the diamonds; and I will write you the paper."

The Duke handed it to him, and looked at him curiously.

"Spada," he said, "do you ever believe anybody?"

"Very seldom."

"Well, believe me for once, if you can. I *like* you. You have checkmated me to-night, I confess. Knowing what I know about you Italian soldiers of fortune, I should have had my guards within call. Do you know why I like you?"

"No, your Grace."

"Because you are a gentleman as far as this: you would serve me if I would make it worth your while. I don't ask you to trust yourself in my hands again, because the temper of Burgundy is capricious; but if you did come under my hands again I think that you would not suffer. Do you see that you hold a terrible power over me? Do you see that for to-night's work you might render me ridiculous? Of course I could stop your mouth when you came into my hands again; but meantime you are going to Dendermond to fetch in my troops, and will have all kinds of opportunities to tell the story of to-night's work, which will do me infinite harm. Are we to be friends or enemies?"

"Friends, if you will spare Van Dysart."

"I cannot spare him," said the Duke; "he must go. Now I will take you through the guards, and see you free. Be quick; the dogs will rise to-morrow."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE old studio of the Van Eycks was as quiet as ever. Martina had come in, certainly, and had sat down by the great fire, near Marie Van Eyck; whereupon Marie had retired to another room, and Margaret had asked Martina not to lie down before the fire with her head near it. But Martina had laid there, nevertheless; and when Margaret had remonstrated with her once more, Hubert Van Eyck had turned from his easel, and held up his finger. Margaret obeyed at once; and Hubert beckoned to her.

She was at his side in a moment.

"Mag," he said, "will she sit to-night?"

"No, dear; she is mad again. There is trouble in the town; the Duke has put on a tax, and the hands have struck."

"Mag, what work are you doing?"

"I am working at the right voile, at Sister Priscilla."

"Is she here?" asked Hubert.

"She is here," said a deep voice from before Margaret's easel.

"What is John doing?" asked Hubert.

"He is at work at Van Kenning now," said Margaret.
"Dearest, how does your work go?"

"We are painting the great picture of all time," said Hubert Van Eyck; "but the world will never, never know it. Mag, has that poor woman brought her dog?"

"Yes, Hubert; the little thing is here lying beside her."

"Mag, put that table out in the light, and get me the little grey dog?"

"Why, dear?"

"I shall paint it for the lamb, in the centre."

"Dear Hubert—a dog?"

"Yes, Mag, a dog-like lamb. That little Scythian dog is the humblest dog I have ever seen. Leave me alone, Mag; I know that I am right."

The little Scotch dog was put on the table by Margaret, but was eminently unsuccessful. It tried to do its very best, but it did not understand Dutch, and it propped up and wagged, and would not be held by Margaret Van Eyck. It wanted to be good, but did not know how.

Hubert Van Eyck put down his brushes, and said—

"It will not do, Margaret; yet I know I am right. If I could get the expression of that humble little dog, in the face of the lamb, I should do right; but I cannot get it."

"You must try Marie," said Margaret.

"Marie irritates me, Mag," said Hubert. "I will put in the ideal lamb, after all."

Which thing, I believe, he did not do; for I believe that the lamb was painted by John, but we really know very little about this magnificent picture; in many respects the greatest ever painted.

"Mag," said he, sitting down wearily beside her, "what are these new troubles in the town?"

"Great troubles, brother. The Duke has put on a new tax; the hands are out; and the Duke has no soldiery."

Hubert cried out "John!" and John came with his palette on his thumb, bright, fresh, handsome, and shallow as ever.

"Have you heard of the troubles in the town?" said Hubert.

"Yes," said John, "but I think little of them. I was with Philip to-day at the backgammon at the club, and he says that if the troops come in from Dendermond nothing will happen."

"He lies!" suddenly cried Martina, rising up from before the fire.

"I wish, in Heaven's name!" said John Van Eyck, "that

you, brother and sister, would not disgrace us by having that she-fiend about the place."

"She is better here than elsewhere, John," said Margaret, very quietly. "Any of us might want mercy some day."

John expressed his opinion of her pretty strongly, whereat Margaret, *per contra*, took exception to some ladies about the Court, to whom John would have doffed his bonnet.

Hubert said suddenly, but in a whisper—

"The woman shall come here if I choose. The woman could burn our house down if she chose."

John was at once silent, for he was most heartily afraid of his brother the moment he was roused to anger. Martina, in the meanwhile, said—

"I am going away—to leave you."

Margaret dropped her brushes on the floor, and said, quickly—

"Why?"

"Why!" she said, wearily, "because I can't be good. John and Marie insult me, and I want to be among the people again. Our clan is not a good clan. I must go."

Margaret began to cry.

"You had better stop those tears, Margaret," said Martina, "or they may cost a life. If I see you cry, I get mad, and know no mercy, even to *him*. Hubert and John, come with me."

Both the brothers were slightly scared by her address. They knew her character—alas! a very bad one—her political knowledge, and her terrible determination. It was with the most singular anxiety that they followed her to the lower end of the room.

"The devil is abroad," she said.

"In which direction?" said Hubert.

"In the tax on salt-fish," she said. "Van Dysart leads a rebellion on the subject. Van Kenning knows everything. Well, would you have him ask for Van Dysart's ruin?"

"Yes," said John.

Hubert was silent.

"The troops are on the march from Dendermond, and Van Dysart can stop them. Van Kenning, Spada, and I know the whole plot. At this moment I can go to him and warn him that the plot is discovered, and save him."

Again Hubert was perfectly silent, and John said, "No."

"May I ask you, as a matter of detail, John Van Eyck, whether you intend to repeat any part of this conversation?" said Martina.

"I shall of course report it to the Duke."

"I think I would not," she said; "because I have the power to have you assassinated. You think, then, you two, that you will not spare him?"

Again there was dead silence, and she left them. As far as they went, the man was doomed. She passed away into the street without a word of farewell, and the little Scotch terrier followed her some distance, but Margaret missed it, and ran after it. So the two women had just time to say good-bye before they parted.

The Macdonald girl, who called herself Martina, had a heavy heart, and she might have been relieved by tears after her parting with Margaret; but that was not to be. A heavy hand, like a man's, was on her shoulder, and looking up, she saw Sister Priscilla.

"Where are you going now?" she said.

"Among the people."

"So am I," said Sister Priscilla. "Let's go together."

This was entirely a new view of matters to Martina. She actually laughed.

"Will you follow me, or am I to follow you?" she said.

"I'll follow you," said Sister Priscilla, "if you don't mind looking round and getting Father Peter."

"Not in the least," said Martina. "I should always be glad if I was in no worse company than that of a priest and a nun. But let us talk as we go."

"We will talk, by all means," said Sister Priscilla; but we will talk one at a time, and not both together. Have you any objection to that?"

Martina had naturally none.

"Then I'll begin," said Sister Priscilla, "and I will go on as long as I have wind; and then you shall go on as long as your breath lasts. What are you meaning towards this man?"

"You have broken down rather suddenly," said Martina.

"What are you going to do about this man—this Van Dysart?" said Sister Priscilla, "this murderer of Leon? What are you going to do about him, woman? You are going to spare him—you know it. You know that your heart is tender about him still, and for the sake of old love you would ruin the liberty of the nation. If that man, with his dandy false republicanism, is allowed to rise at the head of the people just now, he will have committed himself just so far as to be brought up by Burgundy; for you know that the troops are coming from Dendermond, and that he has power; and then you have the people in the hands of Burgundy, as red with the blood of Christ's poor as his own wine.

You are bound in every way to ruin this man. An unsuccessful insurrection would save him."

"Sister Priscilla," said Martina, "you are entirely wrong. I know what I am talking about; you do not. An unsuccessful insurrection would ruin him. I can make him or mar him. I have accidentally supreme power in the State just now, and I could do as I choose. But if you will come with me to all those who have vowed to ruin Van Dysart and the others, we will hear what they say. I wish to be clear with you; I desire your good opinion, though you are a good woman, and I am not a very good woman. I am forced to this ruin of the man who wrought *my* ruin. So are others—yourself, Spada, Van Kenning, the Van Eycks, Father Peter, the people—some of them at least—Margaret, and the Duke of Burgundy. Let us go and pick up Father Peter, and let we three go round to all of them in turn, and see what they wish us to do."

"Father Peter and I are sound on the subject," said Sister Priscilla, biting her nails. "I don't much like to be seen with you. It does no good to us. But we will come to Father Peter and get him. After that I will do what you wish."

"You promise," said Martina.

"I promise," said Sister Priscilla.

Father Peter happened to have been out all night with a case of quotidian ague, and as the Jesuits had not then discovered that bark which we debased mortals call chinchona or quinine, he had had to sit up all night until his patient's shivering fit had passed. Consequently he was extremely cross at being pulled out of his bed, on a matter which he distinctly avowed was none of his. His toilette was so very simple, like that of monks in general—judging from those we saw at Brussels the other day among the surrendered French officers, and also remembering our Rabelais' description of a monk's toilet—there was hardly time for much conversation before he came out as savage as a bear with a sore head. Still, Sister Priscilla had time to say to Martina, "We had better bring him."

Martina said, "Now why?"

"He represents the obstinate form of the ecclesiastics as regards the people," said Sister Priscilla. "He would terrify Burgundy."

"You have more sense than I gave you credit for," said Martina. "That is just the reason I let you call for him."

"Let me?" said Sister Priscilla.

"Yes, let," said Martina. "I am mistress on this errand. See, here is Father Peter."

And there was Father Peter, with the chilblains still remaining on his naked feet, excessively cross, but entirely plucky.

"I," said Sister Priscilla, "have agreed that I should take her wherever she wants to go over this Van Dysart business. Where first, Martina?"

"We must take the bull by the horns," said Martina. "We must go to the young Prince of Burgundy first."

Father Peter immediately sat down on a doorstep and rubbed his knee.

"Get up, you old fool," said Sister Priscilla: "the woman knows what she is saying." The only difference in Father Peter's moral attitude was that he stood upright and scratched his tonsure.

CHAPTER XIX.

THERE happened to be a great gathering at the young Duke's palace that night. *The* Duke was away to France that day, and young Philip, afterwards "le Bon," was left to keep Court for him, it being considered good policy that some kind of Court should be kept up at Ghent or Bruges for the sake of the tradesmen, who grumble if a Court is removed. The Jenkins of the period has no doubt described that wonderful gathering in the fullest manner; he has doubtless been as particular as Froissart, or the gentleman who does the *Court Circular*: we will not go into the details of the dresses ourselves: you can see them in the pictures of the Van Eycks, of Memling, and of Coexie: our business is more with the general effect, which may be worth reproducing.

In the hall, which stands, little altered, to this day, there was a splendid company; such a company for dress as is never seen now. We have pageants certainly, such as those of the Order of the Garter or Bath; the Town Council of Edinburgh, or the assembled Doctors at Oxford. But in those days of which we speak *every one* dressed, and what is more, dressed in good taste, and what is more, went to Court in his best clothes; clothes which at the time cost, per suit, about three times a dandy's year's tailor's bill of modern times. So that an ordinary Court in those times was a very splendid thing.

Their ideas of social enjoyment were not great, yet these political crushes must have been nearly as amusing as the crushes of

modern times, for the devil was always at the door, and no one knew what was going to happen next. So instead of talking about the next ball, people talked of the next insurrection, with the same coolness with which Paris, in the late siege, talked of the last battle. On the night of which we speak, the night on which the wild Macdonald woman, Sister Priscilla, and Father Peter had determined after consultation to disturb young Burgundy's amusements, there was very fine company indeed.

The Van Eycks were there in their very finest clothes, having put aside their painting, and dressed in the most artistic manner. They were standing and talking close to the dais at the upper part of the hall. Near them was Van Kenning, dressed in scarlet velvet, with white hose and blue shoes, which called down on him the utter reprobation of Hubert Van Eyck, who at once gave him a lesson on colour. Spada was splendid: he had won money—from young Van Rugby of Rotterdam if it mattered—and he had paid cash before delivery to old Van Judenstrasse, and got a beautiful suit of clothes (which Dame Krankenglauber distinctly averred she had seen on Duke John's back long before old Levi got his title of Van Judenstrasse). Spada's clothes were splendid, and the jewels he had borrowed from several young ladies were splendid also. Spada was an entire success, but hardly such a success as Van Dysart. Van Dysart was dressed in light pearl grey from head to foot, without a single ornament. The Duke was very late, and until he came, the Archbishop, birreta in hand, with a cloud of priceless yellow Malines lace over his dark robes, went up and down the hall making himself agreeable until the young Duke came in. I think the sight, all in all, was such a one as we cannot see nowadays.

The Archbishop was at the lower end of the hall, talking diligently to every one. He was talking to two ladies when he saw that their attention was not for him, and that their eyes were directed over his left shoulder. Turning he saw that Spada was close to him waiting for an interview, and he instantly turned and took his arm.

"Walk up the hall with me, Bishop," said Spada.

"Count Spada——"

"Yes, I know; but at least come out of earshot."

"I do not like to be seen with you," said the Bishop.

"Few do," said Spada. "But if you will take the advice of an old soldier you will be seen with me now."

The Archbishop at once took the arm of Spada, and walked up and down the hall with him, with an air which showed that the Archbishop committed himself neither one way or another; which

made folks say, firstly that Spada was a respectable man, or the Archbishop would not have walked with him ; secondly, that the Archbishop was a disreputable man for walking with Spada ; and, thirdly, that they could not make head or tail of it. However, there was the spectacle of the most immaculate and saintly Archbishop walking up and down with the dreadful Count Spada, and almost immediately afterwards his other arm was taken by Van Dysart, who held him quite as tight as Spada. Van Kenning, who was the sharpest man in Ghent, was determined to see after this arrangement, and followed the Archbishop in time to hear Spada say to Van Dysart, right across the Archbishop, and out loud, "I want to speak to the Archbishop alone."

"Thank you, good Spada," said Van Dysart, "you shall do so. Father, will you give me your benediction?" and then and there he knelt down and got himself blessed by the Archbishop, to Spada's great amusement. For Spada saw his hand at once; he had trumped Spada's trick utterly. Spada had wished to gain credit by walking arm in arm with the Archbishop, but Van Dysart had startled the Archbishop into a public benediction. He said a few vague words about the salt-fish tax to the Archbishop, and was confidential with him. He said that it was so bad for the Dukedom that the Duke always went away the moment a new tax was imposed. He left the Archbishop with an idea that he was a sensible man of the world, and turned to confront Van Kenning.

"Did you see that?" he said.

"What?" said Van Kenning.

"That dodge of Van Dysart's to get the episcopal benediction in public. There are the makings of a very noble rogue about that young man, fool as he is."

"I saw," said Van Kenning, "he beat you capitally. What are you going to do about him? Why are you not half-way to Dendermond? You know what is going to happen."

"I wrote to the young Duke as soon as the old one was out of the way, and I asked him to send after his father to get a confirmation for bringing the troops from Dendermond."

"You are a bold man."

"I was always reckoned so; but you know more of these Flemings than I do; will they rise to-night or to-morrow night?"

"That is a great deal to tell," said Van Kenning. "Ask Van Dysart," he said, scornfully.

Van Kenning stood aghast: the reckless Italian walked across the hall, and said in a loud voice to Van Dysart, under the very nose of the Archbishop—

"Will your people rise to-night?"

"Not under my orders," said Van Dysart. "*I shall give no orders for to-night, because we are not ready. We expected that you would have been at Dendermond by now, and we have not prepared.*" Spada went back to Van Kenning.

Van Kenning was very cross. "You are too utterly and outrageously reckless; what on earth made you force him to declare himself?"

"Well, I thought that it would be amusing, and I like courage. He is a fine fellow you see, though I thought when I first knew him that he was a mean and selfish fool."

"Your notions of a fine fellow," said Van Kenning, "are a little different to mine. I consider him a rascal."

"It may be fellow feeling possibly," said Spada, "but I rather like rascals. I don't as a rule like good people; they are never good when they run short of money, and can't get what they want. I really think that you are the only virtuous person I ever liked in my life."

Van Kenning looked at him with his keen, steady old eye, and saw that the man was speaking the truth. His reply was like himself, very dry; he said—

"What a pity it is that you are such a very sad vagabond."

They had been standing together before an arras, at the further end of the hall, and as the word "vagabond" passed Van Kenning's mouth, they each felt a hand on their shoulders, and turning, found themselves face to face with the younger Burgundy, Philippe le Bon.

"Quarrelling?" he said, in a whisper.

"Not at all," said Spada. "He called me a vagabond, and he never spoke a truer word in his life. My mother (God bless her!) always used to say that I should become one, and she was the best and wisest woman I ever knew. She said I should become a condottiero, and I have become exactly that same thing. I am at a loss to conceive why I should quarrel with my good Van Kenning because he has pointed out to me that my mother was one of the wisest women ever known."

"You are very good-natured, Spada," said Van Kenning.

"Allow me to proceed. My mother used to say that, with my remarkable personal advantages, I should be certain to marry a rich woman. Now, there my mother's judgment failed her. Now——"

He had got Burgundy off the trail, and was only wanting to find out how much he had heard. Burgundy interrupted him.

"I have not heard what you were talking over. Will you two

come up with me through these gaping fools, and get this Court business over. After that, I want you to follow me out for a consultation. My father has gone, and, as I hear from three lunatics, there is trouble in the town. I wish my father would not go whenever there is trouble. Is Van Dysart here?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"My father says that Van Dysart must go; and now I find, Spada, that my father had *insisted* on your going to Dendermond. I am, however, glad that you are here. Van Kenning, go up to the dais, and tell the trumpeter to blow, and the taberdars to be ready."

Van Kenning walked rapidly up the hall, saying right and left "The Duke, the Duke!" and getting hold of the usher, the trumpets were blown, and the throng separated.

It was a really splendid sight now with the mingling colours of the courtiers on each side, and the lane of bright carpet between. The Bishop hurried down, the usher hurried down, and each took their places. Young Philippe le Bon then took his place between Van Kenning and Spada, to the unutterable astonishment of every one; then they saw, to their equal astonishment, that the young man was followed by eight guards in steel. The procession moved slowly up the hall, the young Duke not bowing to any one, as his usual custom was, but looking from right to left very keenly, and somewhat angrily. The Archbishop and the usher walked in front, a most stately couple; then the Duke, in violet, and the two others in the brave clothes described before; after them the steel guards. The procession had gone half way up the hall, when Philippe le Bon called a halt just as he was opposite a handsome young man, dressed in pearl grey—strange contrast to the gaudy figures around him, and a little in advance of the others.

"Van Dysart," said the young Duke, "you are a foul traitor!"

Spada and Van Kenning both whispered—

"For God's sake! my Lord."

"I say," said Philip, "that you are a foul traitor. Guards, seize him!"

The clumsy guards ran in on him, but not before he had his sword out; and, the frightened courtiers having fallen back, he was alone with his naked weapon before them all. The heavily-armed steel-clad guards knew perfectly well that it was death for one of them at least to approach a gentleman's sword, and hesitated; but Spada had out his sword like lightning, and dashed at him. They had often fenced in fun, but now they were fencing in earnest. The Italian had him disarmed in half a minute; but

after giving him the fatal wrist-cut, Spada committed what he had never committed before in fencing, a *bêtise* ; he stumbled, and fell on the top of his man. The screaming ladies, and the frightened courtiers, both remarked it. The real truth is, that Spada did it on purpose, and when he was on the ground with his man, he whispered in his ear—

“Submit, and we will save you yet.”

Van Dysart had enough sense left to allow himself to be bound by the guards. But he turned to Philippe le Bon, and said—

“You will be sorry for this, young Burgundy. I will ruin you for this.”

What followed was singularly like the man, Philippe le Bon, as far as I can make him out. He ordered silence, and thought for a few moments. Then he said—

“Do you confess yourself a traitor, Van Dysart ?”

“Yes,” said Van Dysart, furiously ; “I know I must die, but in dying I can still hurl defiance at a puny boy like you. I do not so much care for the people as I hate your house. I have only truckled with the people because I hate you, and your whole house.”

“Why should you hate us ?” said Philippe le Bon.

“Because you put us Flemings in an inferior position ; because you have no business here ; because—curse all French ; let me go to my death.”

“Yes.”

“Don’t torture me ; let me die at once. Come, young Burgundy, you have won, and I have lost ; but these limbs of mine, now to pass into rottenness for ever, were once dear, and may be still dear to a woman, who had better never have seen me. I will tell everything I know without torture.”

“Well.”

“Let her see me when I am dead ; with death before me, I am very sorry for what I did to her. Come, young Burgundy, although I hate your house, you have some manhood.”

“Anything more before you go to death ?”

“Nothing,” said Van Dysart.

“Guards, release that gentleman, and let him go free. Spada, I see that you have his sword—restore it. Van Dysart, you are as free as I am ; but will you remember this, that if the Flemings will cease to be factious and riotous, it will not be necessary for the house of Burgundy to be cruel.”

It was by this sort of policy that this man, who burnt Bruges afterwards, earned the title of “Philippe le Bon.” His policy in after times was exceedingly like the German policy of last year ;

resistance was resented, but when resistance ceased there was nothing but tenderness. We suppose that to be the true policy in war; it has been ours everywhere, and we have had to see German Landwehr giving half their rations to the starving French peasantry on the battle-field of St. Prevat. Let us, however, go on, for a meeting of some very singular people is at hand; and the fate of Van Dysart is by no means settled.

After this scene, Philip, the Archbishop, Spada, and Van Kenning went round a little among the courtiers, and the courtiers were soon got rid of, and all that was necessary had been done, with the solitary exception of sending away a young man who was hanging about, blowing out the lights and listening. That young man having been sent away "with a flea in his ear," the young Duke recommenced.

"Has he got his lesson?" said the young Duke.

The Archbishop thought not. He distrusted Van Dysart still.

Van Kenning did not know. There were ugly points about him. He was a man with a bad temper, who might be more troublesome than many men with a good temper. He did not exactly see his way to Van Dysart, even now.

"He spoke well," said the young Duke.

"Oh, yes, he spoke well enough," said Van Kenning; "but I am by no means sure that he will not turn Turk for all that. I don't see *my* way."

Spada was very emphatic. The man was a hero of rascality, a true hero, who could face death like a man. Spada was tremendous. He could not have believed that there was such a high quality of courage to be found in a Fleming. (Whereon Van Kenning asked him to say that again, spoilt his period, and made him repeat the old scene in the backgammon club between himself and Van Kenning.) Spada said that the man was a man of mettle—a man who might be serviceable to the State—a man who should be bought up at all cost by the house of Burgundy.

"But the rascal is rich, and can't be bought," said Philippe le Bon. "He is not like you, Spada. Any one could buy *you*."

"That is perfectly true," said Spada, without moving a muscle. "I am a cheap article, and he is a dear one. It is merely a matter of destroying him or of buying him: that is all we have to consider now."

"We will go, if you please, to another room," said the young Duke, and parting the hangings, he led them into a small reading-room, and shut the door after him.

CHAPTER XX.

In this room there sat, in a row, Father Peter, Sister Priscilla, and the woman Macdonald, who called herself Martina. They rose up as the young Duke came in, and remained silent.

"Nun, priest, and lunatic," growled Philip to Spada; "shall we get at the truth among them?"

"The lunatic is the most likely one. Will you let me speak to her?"

"Do so. I suspect that you know the way to speak to her better than I do."

Spada advanced, and looking straight at *Sister Priscilla*, said—

"You are, I believe, the Scotchwoman who calls herself Martina?"

He knew what he was about perfectly well. Van Kenning put his hand over his mouth to hide his laughter, for he knew as well as Spada that a foolish and angry woman will blurt out the truth.

"I am not here to be insulted by the condottieri of the bloody house of Burgundy; I am here to denounce that house as the most bloodthirsty and brutal which the world has ever seen. I am a holy woman, vowed to God, and in your own palace, you pale young Duke, I tell you that your house is doomed. In two days from this time your palaces shall be burning about your ears, for Spada has taken our money to betray you. Why is he not at Dendermond? Where are the troops? Who paid him to deceive you after your father's departure?—why, the trades unions."

"Is this true?" said Philip, turning pale.

"Perfectly true," whispered Spada. "The good people offered me the money, and I of course took it. I always do take money when it is offered to me. You will find that I have not served you at all ill. Don't interrupt; let her go on."

But Sister Priscilla had little more information to give, for the fact of the matter was, that she had told all she knew; and when challenged to prove her facts, went off into a rather ranting tirade about appealing to the Pope.

"What has the priest to say?" demanded Spada.

It turned out that the priest had uncommonly little to say, expecting death every moment for the horrible indiscretion of Sister Priscilla. Father Peter made by no means a good show on this occasion. Father Peter only said that, as a servant of the Holy Father the Pope, he hoped that the Duke would do justice by the people.

"What business have such cattle as you with the Pope?" demanded Burgundy.

"None, if your Lordship wishes," replied Father Peter, perfectly collapsing, to Sister Priscilla's intense disgust, which was expressed by a sniff.

"Then hold your tongue," interrupted Spada. "Now, you lunatic, what have you to say?"

"That I am a Scotchwoman," said the Macdonald woman; "and that I never forgive."

"Not even Van Dysart," said Spada.

"Ha, that is well put," said Philippe le Bon, in a whisper.

"For God's sake, my Lord, hold your tongue," said Spada, "and let me speak. You will spoil all."

"You were speaking of Van Dysart," said the Macdonald woman.

"Yes."

"And what were ye speering anent him?" she said, in Lowland Scotch, forgetting herself, and thinking that she was among Lowlanders only, and not among Dutch.

"Cwd bla thu a' feordsted mu thiormal au duine," she added in Gaelic, more dazed than ever.

"What languages does she talk?" asked Philip. "Are these the Scythian languages?"

Spada spoke to her in French. She remembered herself at once.

"I forget myself at times; but if you wish to get the truth from me, I will speak always the truth in French. He courted me in that language, and I love it."

"Who courted you?" said Spada.

"The man you wish to ruin," she answered.

"How can the Duke wish to ruin him, when he has had him arrested and let him go free without any parole of any sort or kind?" said Spada.

"What do you say?" said Martina.

"I only say that the Duke had him arrested, and has let him go free," replied Spada.

"Now we are all undone," said Martina. "Cannot you catch him again? Why, you are all fools! My Lord Duke of Burgundy, arrest that man. He is dearer to me than all the world, even now, and he will arouse the Guilds and ruin himself and them. Did you insult him?"

"We bound him for a time, and then let him go," said Philippe le Bon.

"Then you are all fools together," she said. "Should not I

know him? I must go and see what I can do; I must go after him. You should have mewed him up—no, not now, Margaret, not now! These wiseacres have let Van Dysart go free, and the State is ruined. He knows neither honour or pity, but I love him."

They all started and turned to see Margaret Van Eyck standing among them, and Martina passing her through the arras.

"I beg the pardon of Burgundy," she said, "but I come here merely for political reasons. It would seem that the life of a true Fleming just now is half painting, half politics. I have been painting for the most part of the day. Burgundy, if you were capable of understanding it, I have been painting at the picture of all time. But now, Burgundy, I am here to tell you that your father has made a great mistake in going away, for the people are rising, and I believe that Van Dysart will head them."

"Will you kindly sit down, Margaret Van Eyck?" said the young Duke, suddenly.

"Not while a woman is standing," replied Margaret. So Sister Priscilla came and sat down also.

"My Lord of Burgundy, have you power to arrest Van Dysart?" said Margaret.

"On what charge, Fraulein Van Eyck? I have arrested him, but have let him go at once."

"It is a great pity. Do you think that he can be arrested, Van Kenning?"

"I should think that it is very difficult, Margaret," said Van Kenning. "Why do you ask?"

"I hardly know why I ask," said Margaret; "but is there no chance of arresting him?"

"Fraulein Van Eyck," said the young Duke, very kindly and quietly, "he will surely not be so base as to turn against me after my generosity of to-day?"

Margaret Van Eyck stood like a statue, thinking; Van Kenning went up to her and led her away quietly to another room.

"Margaret," he said, "are you relenting towards him?"

"Yes," she said.

"Remember, Margaret, that he killed Leon."

"I know that he sent Leon to heaven to wait for me there! But it is all forgiven—all forgiven! When we meet there we shall say nothing about it all; you will say nothing, for example."

"In heaven," said Van Kenning; "no, I shall say nothing there. But here?"

"Van Kenning, you loved me once?"

"I love you to all time: as I loved you on earth so I shall love

you in heaven. I have done my best to ruin Van Dysart because he killed Leon, and because I thought that you desired revenge. His enemies are terrible. The man has eight or nine haters, Margaret. He is hated by—attend to me—yourself, for the death of Leon, by myself for the deep love I bear you; by that mad Scythian woman for her wrongs; by Spada the cut-throat, on account of the Duke of Burgundy, who pays him; by Sister Priscilla for your sake; by a few of the people, for his treatment of Martina; by the trades unions for his courtierism; by some of the people again, because they distrust him. Nothing would be more easy than to ruin the man. We could do it in twenty ways."

"Van Kenning, save him!"

"For your sake?"

"For my sake."

"It is a terribly difficult thing to do if he abuses the clemency of the Duke. If he keeps quiet it may be done, but if he heads the rising rebellion I do not think it is possible. Margaret."

"Yes, Van Kenning."

"We are alone here in this old room; will you do something for me?"

"Anything."

"Then give me one kiss—one kiss I have longed for ever since I knew you—and I will be your slave for ever!"

She bent up her glorious face to his and kissed him. Were there such things as particular stars, the star of Van Dysart must have been burning brightly now; for Van Kenning was not a man to let much grass grow between himself and his purpose.

"You do not want to marry me, dear Van Kenning?"

"If you will give me your love I will never ask for that," said Van Kenning.

"You have had that so many years, my dear, that you make yourself ridiculous," said Margaret, laughing. "We shall be very happy without marrying. Now we are frank and true to one another as brother and sister, I will tell you why I must have that man saved."

"Tell me, then."

"Because I cannot paint with enmity in my heart; because I cannot act with enmity; because I cannot live with a solitary enemy on the earth! Hubert says the same."

"John don't," was the brusque reply of Van Kenning. "He has plenty of enemies, yet he lives well and paints well."

"I do not speak of John or Marie; I speak only of Hubert and myself. I and he have forgiven Van Dysart; help us to save him."

"I wish I had known all this before," said Van Kenning. "We plotted his ruin mainly for your sake. It is not easy to undo a plot, Margaret, but I will do my best. If it were possible even now to prevent his making a fool of himself in the coming insurrection we might do it. It can surely be done. Will you let me ask you one thing?"

"All that you will do will be for the best."

"Do you mind my going and fetching Spada here?"

"But, dear Van Kenning, he is such a great rascal."

"All the better," said Van Kenning. "He has declared for Van Dysart to-night. I see consent in your eyes; sit down."

Van Kenning returned with Spada, and the three sat down on chairs fronting one another. Spada bowed most reverentially to Margaret Van Eyck, and began the conversation by saying, with the voice and air of a perfect gentleman—

"Madam, I am afraid that you think me a sad rascal, and indeed the same thing has been remarked about me before. Madam, I have sold my sword, but I give you my honour—if it is worth anything—that I am no worse than my employers. My mother was a lady, and so I know a lady when I see one. I have at your disposal, Madam, a big chest, an unerring eye, and what is better than all, a very cool head. I am certainly sold to Burgundy, and must keep faith with him, but otherwise I will do everything which Mademoiselle Van Eyck orders me to do."

Margaret bowed, and Van Kenning said, "Spada, we wish to save Van Dysart."

"Exactly," said Spada; "I thought so. Now if you will allow me to speak first we can entirely simplify matters. Would you be kind enough to listen to me?"

They both bowed.

"Van Dysart is in a singularly bad position, and if he makes a fool of himself over this insurrection, he will lose his head. So far, so good. I was hired by the Duke of Burgundy here, to help in ruining this man, and have been and shall be paid for doing it. Now the house of Burgundy have behaved on the whole well to me, and I do not think that it would be right for me to neglect their interests in any way. What follows? I consider that I should neglect their interests if I were to allow them to ruin this young Van Dysart."

Here Van Kenning said, "Spada, you are awfully bold."

"I have heard that remarked before," said Spada, "but you Flemings have no manners—you interrupt. I consider that I should be acting against the interests of my employers if I ruined this man. I also have personal feelings, and my personal feelings

are always towards a very brave man of no principle, like myself. I will, therefore, try to save this man, but I must be paid."

"Well, you see," continued Spada, "that is a matter of detail. I risk much because I risk my head with the house of Burgundy, to which house I am sold. I shall have to steer my ship very cautiously."

"Old Burgundy is away," said Van Kenning.

"Quite so, but young Burgundy is here, and if you think that he is not potentially as cruel as the rest of his family, you may find even *yourself* mistaken, my Van Kenning. I am not for my part quite sure that I would not as soon face his father as himself. In the price, this must be looked to. The boars of Burgundy are quick at charging."

"What price do you demand, Spada?" said Van Kenning.

"It is a very high one, but Mademoiselle Van Eyck can pay it."

"I will give all I have," said Margaret, "and I am rich, very rich. I will give you all I have and earn more. Please, dear Count Spada, save him, and I am sure we shall not disagree as to terms. Count Spada, I am so terribly unhappy about him that I cannot take the sacrament. I will give you all, I will give you my jewels, I will do anything if you will save him."

Van Kenning said, "You hear this, Spada; now hear me. You must not ask money from Margaret Van Eyck, ask it from me. I will pay you anything."

"I do not take money from friends," said Spada, "and I must be paid by Margaret Van Eyck herself. She alone can pay me."

"What do you demand of her?" asked Van Kenning.

"Her friendship, and I hope in better times her esteem," said Spada. "Madam, that is all I ask. Madam, I anticipate every word which is on your lips. I must try to be better. Was that not what you were going to say?"

"It was."

"Give me your friendship, and I will try to be better," replied Spada. "In the old times," he continued in a subdued voice, "before this dreadful fight between poverty and this horrible world, which Christ seems to have saved in vain, begun, I would have pled for your hand. I have fallen too utterly low in my own estimation to think of such a thing now. What maddens men in my position is the thought that they are so unutterably lower than women like yourself, that they dare not address them as equals. Madam, you think that such sold hounds as myself cannot feel their degradation, and that they have forgotten what their mothers were. Madam, you are completely mistaken; the old heaven of

domestic love is as dear to me now as it was when I was an innocent boy, though the gates of it are shut for ever."

Van Kenning sat like a stone statue, but with closed eyes. Margaret began sobbing.

"Spare me those tears, Margaret Van Eyck ; I can stand blood, but not a woman's tears. I am not worthy of them in any way. You will never know on this side of the grave what a villain I have been. But Margaret Van Eyck, when we are before the judgment throne, you an angel, I a devil, say one word for me to the good God—say this for me : say that I never lost my faith in a good woman, and at my worst was always ready to die for one. Say that for me, Margaret, and I will do anything."

Margaret bent down her head, and Van Kenning made a pretence of looking out of the window. He tried to say to himself that such a quaint mixture of ferocity and sentimentality was unusual ; but it was no good ; he had had a mother himself, and he had been in love ; and so he made what some people would call an ass of himself ; he went up perfectly dry-eyed, and put his arm round the rascal Spada's neck.

Spada turned his handsome face up to his and said, "I have not been good for so long, and I feel so very happy." And when he said this Margaret came over to him and kissed him. "Now, you two good people, this is by no means business. I am a cut-throat by trade you know, and I want to know who I am to murder next. Van Kenning, are you to be the next victim ?"

He said it so comically that they made believe to laugh at his joke, but Van Kenning resumed—

"We want this man saved, dear Spada."

"What do you propose ?" said Spada.

"I have not the remotest idea," said Van Kenning.

"Now we are beginning to understand one another," said Spada, "and I will tell you what I will do. I will go and find him out. And I will tell you also what I will do. I will forbid you to ask another question. Good-night !" And he was gone.

Margaret and Van Kenning went back to where the young Duke was sitting, and said that Spada was gone. The prince was very much surprised, but supposed it was all well. It seemed that, as a matter of detail, he had given orders that Father Peter and Sister Priscilla should be "watched." On getting into the street Van Kenning discovered that this "watching" had come to a bad end. Father Peter had gone off like a lamb, but not so Sister Priscilla. For the "watching" of Sister Priscilla there had been told off a young man of singular imbecility, but of great personal strength, in reality a carpenter, but who, under the laws of those

days had to serve his time as a man-at-arms to the Duke, principally because he was six feet high. The police and the military were one and the same thing in those times, and it was that unhappy young man's turn for duty, and his duty in due rotation happened to be the "watching" of Sister Priscilla. Sister Priscilla had known him ever since he was eight years old, and he had been at a school where she taught, in fact she had taught him his paters and aves—the alphabet was not taught then, it was not considered safe. The boy had been, although imbecile, very obstinate, and Sister Priscilla had frequently cuffed and banged him: grown to a young man, he was detailed by the chapter of accidents to "watch" Sister Priscilla, which he did by walking close alongside of her in full armour with a halbert.

If we have been able by our poor art to give you the slightest idea of Sister Priscilla's character, you will perceive that this would be the last thing tolerated by her. She recognised the young man, and ordered him off.

He declined to go, and said that he had orders from the Duke to watch her.

"Do you mean to tell me, Haus Dyke," she said, with concentrated fury, "that that miserable little anatomy the young Duke of Burgundy has selected the most miserable idiot in all Flanders to watch *me*? Go home, you fool, or I'll make you!"

Hans Dyke was very much afraid of her, but the people were laughing at him, and he "got his back up."

"I shall do my duty," he said.

"Your duty, you miserable animal!" said Sister Priscilla. "You did but little of it to your poor old mother. You are sold to Burgundy. People, he is sold to Burgundy. Are you going back to the man who bought you, leaving a quiet woman in peace, or are you not?"

"You will hear from Dendermond soon, mistress," said the young man.

Whereupon Sister Priscilla flew on him with such suddenness and dexterity, that he, encumbered with his armour, went down, and he, moreover, went one way and his halbert another. The spectacle of a man-at-arms being accidentally knocked down by a nun, was very exciting and delightful to the people, but not a soul interfered. The word "Dendermond" had been uttered, and it was enough for *them*.

Van Kenning came up when the nun and the soldier were face to face, after having risen. Van Kenning, looking round on the people, *took the nun's arm*, and at once there was dead silence. Dragoned so terribly as they were, the people had got a political

insight into matters which the people have not now. In the wilder clubs that night (we use the word club before it was invented) the great fact was that there had been a fracas between a soldier and the republican Sister Priscilla; that Van Kenning had come up and taken the arm of the nun, not that of the soldier. Van Kenning the man of the people, was still for the Church. But what would Van Dysart say?

Then in the night at the drinking-houses the matter was argued over again. Van Kenning was obviously for the Church as well as for the people; Van Kenning was the bosom-friend of the Archbishop, he was the bosom-friend of Burgundy himself; it was not well of him so ostentatiously to take the nun's part; yet she was a most notoriously patriotic nun, and had fought a man-at-arms single-handed, and had beaten him; was the man of the people Van Kenning or Van Dysart? Once more, where *was* Van Dysart?

So the clubs and trades unions agitated through the night. In the Judenstrasse Club, a haggard patriot rose and moved that Van Kenning was unworthy of the people's confidence because he had touched a nun. An old man of the Guild of Shoemakers pointed out that she was a democratic nun, known for her vigorous defiance of the house of Burgundy, and the haggard patriot withdrew his motion, with sundry growls.

The "clubs" sat all that night, and instead of organising a system of resistance to the mercenaries who might arrive at any moment from Dendermond, spent their time in arguing over a possible republic. Alas! have we not seen the thing more recently? In the Milkenstrasse the club sat very late—in fact, that club voted itself into "permanent session." Old Père Gobet, a tanner, in his working clothes, with stained dress and stained hands, was on the platform, hammering away, in a blunt hard-headed manner, about the rights of capital and the rights of labour. He was on the dais, with a curtain behind him, and he had his audience in complete attention, when he was interrupted by a roar from every throat in the hall, and at the same moment he felt a hand upon his shoulder. As he stood dazed among the maddened cheers, the old tanner saw what had happened, and he sat down.

What had happened? Why, only a very old story—Whig and workman. While the old man was speaking, a beautiful young man, dressed in scarlet velvet and white, had come in from behind the curtain and laid his white jewelled hand on the old tanner's shoulder. Need we say that it was Van Dysart?

It was so, and the die was cast so far as Van Dysart was con-

cerned. The diamonds and rubies on his fingers looked a little strange on the shoulders of the brown old tanner ; but what odds ? Fine clothes are fine clothes, and folks will follow them. The tanner, although a very sensible and excellent man, was nowhere now. Scarlet velvet, personal beauty, and diamonds, against a sensible old tanner who had given up washing as a bad job years ago ! It was Lombard Street to a China orange.

Van Dysart seemed to have the whole power over the meeting in his own hands ; but some of the older folks remembered that the old tanner, instead of coming down into the body of the hall, went back through the curtains, and these people aver that he was there and then met by a gentleman in dark-coloured silk and minever, whom most of these old people believe to be Van Kenning, though one old lady held out on her very death-bed that it was the devil, to whom the tanner had sold his soul for twenty-four dozen of unsorted hides. Putting two and two together editorially, I am of opinion that it was *not* the devil, but only Van Kenning. I think before we have done, that you will agree with me.

CHAPTER XXI.

WE are afraid that part of this chapter will be, to a certain extent, painful ; but it had best been written. There is nothing shocking or in any way improper in it, but it must be followed, because it accounts for the appearance of Van Kenning at the revolutionary meeting, and for the fact of his carrying away the tanner in the singular way in which he did.

Van Kenning, when he left the Van Eycks and Philip of Burgundy, was fairly puzzled. He had gone away promising to find Van Dysart and give him good advice, and so he naturally bent his steps towards Van Dysart's house, with the most perfect certainty that he would not be there.

The house of Van Dysart had its door open, by which fact Van Kenning knew at once that its master was not in ; but he entered and walked up the great staircase. At the top, as he anticipated, he found two grown men and a boy, rolled in rugs, each on a separate stair, with their swords beside them, forming a perfectly impassable barrier to any thief, but showing also that Van Dysart did not distrust the people, because he had left his front door open.

The young man on the lower step was asleep, but the young man on the next step was awake, talking to the page, who was on the step immediately above him. Van Kenning, with cat-like tread, approached them, for the faces of the two waking figures were turned from him.

"Hans, you are wrong," said the footman to the page.

"Likely enough, Jan," said the page; "but we must find a new service soon."

"He is rich," said Jan.

"Burgundy will cure him of that," said Hans, "after to-night's work."

"Where has he gone, Jan?"

"How should I know?" said the page. "I want to go to sleep."

"Come, pretty lad, tell me. You know, for you were with him, and he sent you home. Tell me where he went, and I will treat you at the lustgarten, and we will have oysters and wine, and you shall see the play."

The listening Van Kenning drew back. I think I can see him now, with one foot on one stair of the second flight of stairs, and the other advanced above it. Out of sight, and nearly in darkness, he had made his retreat just in time, for these fellows, as he knew, were paid to lie, and they earned their wages. Had he wakened them and challenged them, they would never have told him where their master was. This leaky young page would let out more to his fellow-servant than he would to fifty Van Kennings.

The page resumed—

"I should get my throat cut if I told you."

"Your throat cut? you little ass!" said the footman; "he dares not stir. He may have *his* throat cut, but I would be safer if I killed him, than if he killed me. Why, young Burgundy arrested him to-night, and let him go in scorn. Why, Van Kenning has gone against him, and vowed his ruin. I heard him do so in the Duke's barge a year ago, when I was one of the Duke's rowers. That Italian, Spada, is gone against him. The Van Eycks are against him. He has not one friend in the whole world. Why, the Scythian woman, Martina, has gone against him, and vowed his ruin."

"Jan," said Hans.

"Well, pretty," said Jan.

"You will take me to the play?"

"Yes."

"You will give me a whole cake of the English honey cake?"

"I will. Now, where has he gone?"

"To Martina, to the Macdonald woman. I left him there," said the page.

The footman at once uprose, saying, "This is money; you shall have all I have promised, and more. Were you there when they met?"

"Yes."

"How did she take him?"

"Why," said the page, softened by promises of presents, "they kept on kissing, and so I couldn't hear all. Now, I want to go to sleep; I don't know anything more."

The young footman, trained to rascality from his boyhood, was perfectly ready to sell his master; but a more dexterous hand was in the matter than his. A patrol of the men-at-arms was coming along this very street (indeed, there were citizen patrols in every street in those days), when the Dogberry of the watch found himself confronted by Van Kenning.

"You know me?" said Van Kenning.

Dogberry laughed, and turned to his men as if he should say, "Councillor Van Kenning must have his joke;" and the men all roared with laughter in concert.

"I want a man arrested at once. I will accuse him to-morrow morning. He comes from the house of Van Dysart. I charge you to arrest him at once; here he comes."

And so the young footman, coming out of Van Dysart's house with a wild purpose of knocking up the Duke of Burgundy in the middle of the night, to lay his accusation against his master, found himself quietly arrested, and shut up in jail, without the least idea about what he had been doing.

"There is one out of the way," thought Van Kenning; and then he turned to Dogberry. "I see you have three men left. I wish you to come with me into Van Dysart's house."

Dogberry was only too delighted, for Dogberry was rather between the devil and the deep sea: on the one side the people, on the other the great house of Burgundy and the mercenaries at Dendermond. Poor Dogberry had a very sad time of it just then; and indeed the same may be said of all Dogberries. Dogberry was terribly glad to find such a "safe" man on both sides of the hedge as Van Kenning. He would have "stayed the Duke himself," under the authority of Van Kenning.

The page on the upper stair had gone to sleep, and the young man on the third stair had never awakened. But they woke now, for clank, clank up the staircase came the town guard—a sound which awakened every one in those days. The young man and

the boy were both dazed as they rose from their sleep, and saw Van Kenning, whom they knew well, within three stairs of them.

"Let the young man alone, but seize the boy," said Van Kenning.

Dogberry at once did his office on the boy, with a great relief to his mind; for the young man had a sword, not to mention an arrangement of knives equal to that of any Highlandman, which Dogberry's soul loathed.

"Now, you young scoundrel!" said Van Kenning; "we have got you at last."

He had never seen or heard of the boy before; but having been for many years a police magistrate, he knew what he was about. To his unutterable astonishment, the boy defied him.

"I'll say nothing," said the boy; "he has been a good master to me, and I'll say nothing. I'd tell Jan, but I will not say a single word."

Dogberry looked as if he was going to speak; but Van Kenning gave him a look which even Dogberry understood; and he was silent. Van Kenning said—

"Come here to me, boy. We know everything; we know that your master took you to the woman Martina's house to-night; we know that they have made friends together; we know that your master is ruined, and that it is in your hands to save him. Come, my boy, speak out."

The boy began to cry.

"That is right," said Van Kenning to Dogberry, in a whisper. "My boy, I want you to tell me this: do you know a little grey dog?—a little Scotch dog? I want that little dog very much; and you shall go free without betraying your master, if you will tell me where that little grey dog is."

It was fearfully sharp practice on Van Kenning's part; but now that the boy's honour was aroused about his master, it was the only thing to be done. Van Kenning knew that the dog was not with the Van Eycks, or with Father Peter, or Sister Priscilla, and so he suspected that it might be with the Macdonald woman. Hence he put the question to the boy, whom he saw to be in a state of nervous anger and obstinacy; and his bait took.

"I know the dog well," said the boy, frankly, through his tears. "It's the best dog that ever lived. The young Scotchman who was killed told me that there were no dogs like Scotch dogs. I wanted to have the dog myself, but if my master is ruined, as you say, I have no home for it, for I must go into the army. Will you give the dog a home, and a good one? I will tell you where she is."

"At Mistress Martina Macdonald's," said Dogberry, with an exasperating smile.

"Oh, you infernal fool!" exclaimed Van Kenning. "Why did the First Cause ever admit such idiots as you into the Cosmos? Look here, pretty lad! will you tell me where this little dog is? I will promise that it shall do no harm to your master; I will promise that it shall do him all good."

The boy thought, and said—

"Van Kenning, all men speak well of you. I'll tell you the whole truth. The dog is with the Macdonald woman, the mad woman, at No. 3 of the Judenstrasse."

"You have saved your master, my lad," said Van Kenning, "if that is any comfort to you. Dogberry, go away; you are a great fool!"

Dogberry pondered deeply over these last words; but he has not realised them yet. The page went home and slept on the staircase; but Van Kenning was on the track of Martina, and was not long in following it. At this point, I am compelled to say, as I did at the beginning of the chapter, that although there might be some things which were painful, there would be nothing to shock any one.

Van Dysart, in his rage and fury, after his arrest and contemptuous dismissal by young Burgundy, had thrown everything to the winds, and gone back to the only woman he had ever truly loved—the Macdonald woman. I do not for an instant defend either him or her; they were both fearful sinners. I only say that the thing has happened more than once. When the rascal, Van Dysart, saw the ground going from under his feet, he went back to the woman he had ruined, asked her forgiveness, and told her that he would die for her. It is all wrong, and as bad as anything can be, and one hates speaking of such a thing. Their sins towards one another, however, have ceased for ever in this world. We are very sorry to have written this, but we have seen it happen on two occasions, and so it stands.

CHAPTER XXII.

By no means was Van Kenning the man to let the grass grow under his feet, and he was soon knocking at the door of No. 3,

Judenstrasse. It was very quickly opened by no less a woman than the Macdonald, who shall be called Martina no longer.

"Woman," he said, eagerly, "I beg you, if you hope for mercy, to tell me where is Van Dysart. Come, girl, you know me for a trusty and, I think, kindly man. Do tell me, girl, for I wish to save him."

"My husband has gone to the Milkenstrasse Club, Van Kenning."

"Your husband!"

"He has married me to-night, and in future I am Frau Van Dysart," she said.

"Good heaven!"

"So I say," said the woman, whom we must now call Frau Van Dysart. "All the weary old wickedness is over and done with for ever."

"Let me in, Frau Van Dysart," said Van Kenning. "You and I must talk." She at once led him into a little room, and sat down before him, silent. "Is it true?" he said, aghast.

"It is perfectly true," she said. "Whatever I have been, I have never been a liar. Here is my wedding-ring," she added, holding out her hand.

This was an utterly new and confounding complication for Van Kenning; but his brain was very quick, and he was not long in thinking out the problem.

"Frau Van Dysart, how did this happen?" he began.

She replied—

"You had all vowed to hunt him to his death about his duel with Leon. He knew it, and he got desperate, and the gross insult of the young Duke to-day drove him frantic. It was the darkest hour. He looked round the world and saw that he had no friend, and so he came away to me and laid his head here." She pointed to her bosom, and Van Kenning was silent for a time, with an awful silence.

Frau Van Dysart went on—"His ruin was absolutely certain, that he knew. He knew that if he could pacify the pale-faced Margaret, the rascal Spada, and the gentle Hubert Van Eyck, there would still remain young Burgundy, John Van Eyck, and yourself to ruin him. He lost hope altogether, and so he came to me, and I told him all was forgiven between us, and that at least we could die together. He is gone to the club at the Milkenstrasse."

"Frau Van Dysart——"

"We were married by a priest to-night. He put his weary, worn, handsome head on my bosom and told me all, and I forgave

him, and he forgave me. The priests say that there is no marrying or giving in marriage in heaven; but that is no matter to me. We are one soul, and not two, for all eternity. I could have killed him once, for I am a Highland woman; but I will die for him now, and live in heaven with him afterwards."

"Frau Van Dysart——"

"I hear you. Let me talk, and then I will listen to you. Because a pale-faced boy is killed is he to be hunted to ruin? Because every one is in love with Margaret Van Eyck, must he pay all the penalty? A feud is a feud, but marriage stops a feud. I am married, and the feud is over. Margaret is the best of women, and the feud is over with her."

"Frau Van Dysart——"

"For the third time, Van Kenning, I will listen."

"I have known very many Scotchmen in various regiments," said Van Kenning, "and I have always admired them. One thing I have never missed in them, and that thing it shrewd, hard common-sense. Will you be kind enough to talk business with me?"

Van Dysart's wife, in her new position, was prepared for any amount of business; but, as a matter of detail, her little dog was shut out, and she asked might she get him. Van Dysart said, "Certainly," and the little grey Scotch dog was brought in and slapped, and set on a stool, where it sat as good as gold, and listened to the singular conversation which followed.

"Frau Van Dysart," began Van Kenning, "you will not deny that at one time there was the most deadly enmity between yourself and Van Dysart."

She bowed and said, "That is certainly true, but it is all passed. I remember when the priests tried to teach us Latin there was a quotation——"

"I think I know it," said Van Kenning.

"*Amantium iræ amoris integratio est.*"

"That is the quotation," said Frau Van Dysart, "but this is not business."

"The interruption came from you," said Van Kenning. "I will allow that at one time there was a very strong combination against your husband. What is the matter, Madam?"

"Only the new word husband: to think that an honest man like you should speak of Van Dysart as my husband. I thank you; you are the first man who has recognised me; I will do anything you like now. Be silent for a moment, I will be quiet

directly. Mother ! mother ! your daughter is saved from sin for all eternity."

Van Kenning, who happened to be practically a Protestant, did not see his way to the theory, but he spoke like a leal and trusty soul.

"I was not speaking of the consequences of your own actions, Madam, I was merely thinking about Van Dysart, and I was saying—when you advanced the comparatively new theory of forgiveness of God by formula—that there was at one time a very strong combination against your husband. That combination was formed by yourself, myself, Burgundy, Spada, the Van Eycks, and a mad nun and a mad priest ; will you attend to business, and go through them with me, because, Madam, we all want to save your husband."

"I will go through them," said she.

"The thing began in this way," said Van Kenning. "Margaret said that she wanted vengeance for the murder—though it was a fair duel—of Leon."

"Did Margaret Van Eyck ever ask for vengeance ?" said Van Dysart's wife.

"It is perfectly certain."

"It was very unlike her," said Frau Van Dysart.

"You see, Madam, that she would never have said a word to you on the subject."

"I see."

"I want," continued Van Kenning, "to disabuse your mind—and his—on one point. There was a terribly strong combination against him at one time, and only three enemies remain : of these three two can be easily removed, the third and last is the most powerful and the most terrible."

"Tell me about these three enemies then," said Frau Van Dysart.

"I will tell you about all," said he. "Spada has forgiven him for his courage : Margaret and Hubert out of their love : I for my love for the Van Eycks, and you—his most desperate and deadly enemy—because he has become sentimental to you once more. That last is a good thing, and takes a deal of trouble off our hands."

"I see three enemies left," said Frau Van Dysart. "Who are they ?"

"Sister Priscilla and Father Peter."

"But they are for the people."

"Also for the Church, and the Archbishop is with them. I am not sure of them one way or the other. I cannot trust them :

they are always at confession, confessing sins they never committed to worse sinners than ever they were."

"But," said Frau Van Dysart, "we can easily manage those two. Who is the third and last enemy?"

"Burgundy."

"Ha! I see," she said; "that is very serious."

"It is more than serious," said Van Dysart. "The anger of Burgundy means utter and irretrievable ruin. Are you beginning to follow me?"

"I have followed you from the first," she said.

"Will you help us to save him?"

"Can you ask me if I will save my own husband?" she replied.

"Give me your hand then," said Van Kenning, and he told Margaret after, what a very pretty little hand it was.

"If things had been otherwise," he said to her, "matters might have been different between us, but I am glad this has come about. Madam, young Burgundy is very angry. Madam, the young Burgundy is one of those good-natured devils who would not go out of his way to save his own mother from being burnt alive as a witch."

"I know that," she replied.

"He is horribly angry, and he comes of a furious house. He only let Van Dysart go free this afternoon to ruin him most utterly."

"I wish that I had known that before," she said, "but I did not see it. Would it do any good if I was to assassinate young Burgundy?"

"It would be worse than no use whatever," said Van Kenning, as if it were a mere matter of business. "You could not do it, and Spada is away to Dendermond to fetch the troops. It is idle to think of such a thing. Young Burgundy is the only important enemy which Van Dysart has, save himself, and Burgundy must be *bought*."

"Who is to pay the money?" said she.

"Oh, I will pay the money for Margaret's sake," said Van Kenning. "It is not a matter of money, the matter is this. Have we time to prevent his committing himself to this lunatic insurrection?"

"Van Kenning, we are nearly, if not quite too late. I have ruined him at last. Why were you not here before?"

"Because I am not two men," said Van Kenning. "Brush up your intellect, and see how we can in any way save him. Did you actually send him to the Milkenstrasse Club?"

"I did."

"You had better have cut his head off his shoulders. That young Philip is quite as cruel a hound as his father, but we may buy your husband off, and get him to England; and the young dog Burgundy is a coward, and so we may frighten him. These are our only chances. We must be very quick, or all will be lost. Young Burgundy let him go to-day that he might commit himself more deeply, and by now he has done the very thing Burgundy wanted him to do. Come girl, we want to save him; tell me how."

"Let me think for ten minutes," she said.

Van Kenning sat looking at her, and thinking how weirdly beautiful she was with this new life opened before her. After five minutes, she looked at him and said, "Spada is away to Dendermond?" and he said "Yes." Before the ten minutes were over she said to him, "Come away," and he followed her into the street.

They were both bent on undoing the evil they had done to one man, and they worked with a will. Margaret Van Eyck—the cause of it all—had got wax candles before her easel, and was painting away on the left side of the great picture, on the minever and velvet of Van Kenning. She was late down the next morning, and spoke of her "hard night's work" to Marie, John Van Eyck's wife. But neither of them knew the night's work which Van Kenning and the Macdonald woman were doing for the State.

"Go to the Milkenstrasse Club, and catch Gobet the tanner," she said, after a short conversation; "I will go away and warn the people. I can manage much, you can manage the rest."

It was a very strange night's work indeed. Van Dysart's wife was about everywhere among the working population, showing her wedding ring to the women, and praising her new husband to the skies for his noble and honourable conduct towards her. She told all the women how kind and gentle he had always been to her, and how badly she had behaved to him. She was now, she pointed out, Frau Van Dysart, and a lady; the wife of the man who had stood before Burgundy beside the good Van Kenning on the side of the people, and she always added to this that Van Dysart said they must wait, only for a little time, but that they must wait. Both Van Kenning and Van Dysart, now good friends, said that they must wait.

One loud-mouthed fishwoman said that they had waited long enough, and were going to wait no longer. She—the fishwoman—was an honest woman, and no draggletail. She went on to say

that when women like the woman before them married gentlemen, they deserted the people, and, in short, gave a slight sketch of the brand new Frau Van Dysart by no means flattering.

The poor Frau Van Dysart trembled, and thought that it was all over with her; when another lady came forward, and said—

“She has lived an ill life, and who is the best or the worst among us? It is evident that Van Dysart is with us, for he has ruined himself with the house of Burgundy by marrying her. Let us take it for granted that the woman speaks truth, and let us trust our old friends, Van Dysart and Van Kenning. Van Dysart is a rascal; I would say that to his face; but he has done right by this woman at the risk of his head. I say with her, ‘wait.’”

It was at about the third or fourth gathering of women that this occurred; it was in a drinking house, probably not of the most select character; and a voice near the door was heard to exclaim—

“Where are the men?”

It was hard to say; scarcely any were there, and the women dividing, saw Sister Priscilla, who was evidently in a very bad temper.

“Go, you cackling idiots, and get your husbands and brothers home; there must be no rising to-night. Spada is close by from Dendermond with the troops, and we are not ready. I have been talking to Van Kenning and Van Dysart, and it is not to be yet. Go after your husbands and brothers!”

Every word of this was utterly untrue, but I suppose that she confessed and was absolved. The real truth is, that she had been with Margaret Van Eyck, and that Margaret had put by her painting, kissed her, and prayed her to go and see that Van Dysart did not make a fool of himself; after which Margaret, like most artists, had gone out of herself once more, and with her wax candles had gone on painting Van Kenning’s minever.

Why do you grumble at this? Margaret was a good woman and a shrewd woman; but for such high work as that of the two brothers and sister Van Eyck, repose is necessary. We hate as much as any one the spectacle of a twopenny novelist or a twopenny poet neglecting his affairs for the purpose of writing a little better; but in the case of great genius considerable latitude should be given. People like the Van Eycks should not in any way be troubled by sublunary affairs at certain times (and indeed they were not, with the exception of John, who insisted on having his finger into every pie before it was baked). Great geniuses in these

days, again, ought not to be in any way troubled by pecuniary matters or other, but should be pensioned by the State. But we get out of the difficulty in this way now: we have no great geniuses, and if we had, the publishers and picture dealers would pay them. If a man can write well or paint well, he will get quite as well paid by the "trade" as ever he was by any prince who ever lived. But the worst of it is that the "trade" pay so well that there is a temptation to "scamping" work—a thing which the Van Eycks never did. And so we leave Margaret at her easel—for a time.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE adventures of Van Kenning on this wonderful night were scarcely less singular than those of a modern War Correspondent. He made for the club at the Milkenstrasse, and tried to force his way in at the back-door through the crowd, whereupon he was promptly collared by Dogberry in the dark, and told that he would be brought up for judgment the next morning before himself.

"Van Kenning," said Dogberry, with his hand on Van Kenning's collar, "has his faults. He goes too strong after the people, he is always after M. Van Eyck; but he gives just judgments, and is a friend to the police. He will give a just judgment on you, my lad!"

Van Kenning struggled away from Dogberry, and the mistake was explained. Dogberry was full of explanations, but all that Van Kenning said was—

"I want Gobet the tanner, you fool!"

"Gobet the tanner?" said Dogberry. "It is a wicked and foolish world, to think that I should have laid hands on his honour's sacred person, and told his honour that I would arraign his honour before his honour's own self."

"If you don't tell me where Gobet the tanner is, I shall be arraigned for your murder before the Duke to-morrow morning."

Dogberry laughed loudly; his honour would always have his joke.

Van Kenning got quiet with the fool at once.

"Look here, my man!" he said. "You know me; and if you don't take me to the tanner at once you shall lose your office to-morrow morning."

Dogberry was himself directly, and by some narrow passages he got behind the arras on the dais just in time to see Van Dysart before him, prepared to go before the audience. He ran forward and clutched his arm—

"Van Dysart," he said, "do not be a madman!"

"Do not you be a villain!" said Van Dysart. "All is known to me now. Can you deny that you were in the plot against my life?"

"I do not deny it," said Van Kenning, "but I am not now."

"Liar! you wish for time, that Spada may bring the troops up and ruin us."

The next moment he was on the dais and before the people, while Gobet the tanner was with him.

"Gobet," said Van Kenning, "the matter is quite hopeless, but I want to save him."

"You?"

"Yes, he must be saved; and we for the present must submit."

"I trust you," said Gobet; "you never lie."

"To show you how little I lie, Gobet," said Van Kenning, "I will tell you this. It is going all over the town that Spada will bring up troops from Dendermond to-night. That is an utter lie; he cannot be here under three days. If the people choose to rise to-night, they can hold the town and sack Burgundy's palace!"

"You are drunk, Van Kenning," said Gobet.

"I usually am," said Van Kenning, sneering.

"And yet you recommend no rising?"

"Most assuredly so. You would bring the wrath of old Burgundy on you, and where are you then?"

The old man stroked his chin.

"We can fight," he said.

"And be beaten," added Van Kenning; "you have no leader."

"Van Dysart?"

"He!" said Van Kenning; "a dicing, dandy swordsman. Why, you had better have bought Spada before the Duke bought him."

"You," said Gobet.

"I know as much about fighting as a hare does of killing dogs. Besides, you will be certain to lose, and have the town burnt about your ears. You had much better wait; young Burgundy is frightened, and will yield all we want under my pressure. I tell you plainly that if you and Van Dysart hound out the people


now to commit themselves, everything is lost. Have I ever been unfaithful to the people?"

"Never, Van Kenning, never!" said Gobet. "The people trust you, but I do not see what we are to do."

"Then I do," said Van Kenning. "We are both bound by the same terrible vow. As master of your lodge, Brother Gobet, I order you instantly to go and get together ten or twelve young Freemasons, to take them to the Carolus Magnus Lodge, and to wait for me."

All the time that Van Kenning had been talking to the old man, he had been thinking how the matter was to be done. Five minutes before this wonderful order was given he remembered that the man was a Mason, and saw the enormous power in his hands, for Masonry was a real power in those days—greater, infinitely greater, than trades unionism is now. Gobet departed on his errand without one word.

The Carolus Magnus Lodge was one rather affected by extreme democrats, and Van Kenning was this year Master, while the younger Burgundy was Master of the Apollo, or "swell" lodge. Van Dysart had made a little political capital of belonging to the Carolus Magnus; in fact, he had induced Spada to join the Carolus Magnus, and Spada, whose sole object it was to hear as much as he could, had done so with perfect willingness. As there are no secrets among Masons, and as Philippe le Bon was also a Mason, it is extremely probable that confidences may have passed between Spada and young Burgundy, which put that very clever and selfish young gentleman on his guard. It is all very well to say that after the lodge is tiled, and the Master is sitting on the cold gridiron (the gridiron not being needed in its hot state for apprentices), that no politics are talked. Such is by no means the case. We will divulge no secrets; but we have been told that Lord Palmerston and Mr. Disraeli were as freely handled after the lodge was tiled, the organ playing, and the *mysterious fire* burning under the Master's nose, as ever they were elsewhere. We have also heard that the characters of the brothers of other lodges are discussed pretty freely; nay, we have heard that other lodges were suspended, as a whole, in the most violent way. But we shall have the Grand Master down on us if we go on. We only wish to say that Van Dysart knew that he was utterly out of favour with the Apollo Lodge—many brother Masons had most fraternally told him *that*—and so when he got a note in a lady's hand just as he came off the dais after making an inflammatory speech, begging him to go at once to the Carolus Magnus Lodge, he went at once.



Van Kenning had just got that note written by a young woman in a tavern, and she gave it to him as he came out, and fled. The poor girl would have done anything for the piece of gold which Van Kenning gave her. Van Dysart went to the Carolus Magnus Lodge and went in. Dogberry saw him go ; but neither Dogberry nor any other of the general public ever saw him come out again.

The lodge was sitting when he made the necessary signals, and he got in. He was rather surprised to see Van Kenning in his full robes on the gridiron, and to find Grand Sword and the A. K. H. B. with their backs against the door. He could not make out the reason also while the P. O. F. had on all his robes, and carried not only his battle-axe, but his sword of St. John, and another sword which we cannot mention here. Van Dysart thought he would sit down ; but the P. O. F. forbade him, and ordered him to go before Van Kenning.

"You masquerading asses," he cried, on a sudden, "this is no true lodge. I appeal to the Grand Master. Van Kenning, you are a false Mason ; you are no Royal Arch, and the P. O. F. is no Templar. I protest against such an iniquity against all true and real masonry. This is a plot, a blasphemy, against our holy craft !"

"Brother," said Van Kenning to the P. O. F. But we cannot say what Van Kenning said. They had made a mistake and they rectified it, upon which Van Dysart submitted.

"You know our rules," said Van Kenning. "The lodge is tiled and in order. Brothers, seize that man !"

The young men brought by Gobet surrounded Van Dysart, and he saw that resistance was quite hopeless ; but he took things seriously still.

"What are the charges against me ? I demand a hearing."

"You must hear them before the Grand Master," said Van Kenning, bursting into laughter. "Why, Van Dysart, my boy, we would not hurt a hair of your head. Take the villain away, you young men, and see that he wants for nothing. Van Dysart, you will not go out walking for a fortnight. Will you have my old Burgundy for your drink, or shall I send in some of the Portugal wine ? Take him to the dungeon, young men, and mind that he does not escape."

CHAPTER XXIV.

AWFULLY fierce was Van Dysart at being "sold" in this way by the Freemasons, with Van Kenning at their head; but there were a good many things to be thought of. He had got out of a present scrape through Van Kenning's well-timed friendship, and by Van Kenning's quaint idea of using the formulas of Freemasonry against him, yet——

He had still some terrible enemies, and he knew now that young Philip of Burgundy was the worst. He had played his cards and lost. The people would rise, and he would not be there; that would ruin him with them. As for Burgundy, he would never forgive. The matter seemed so entirely hopeless, that if he could have broken out of the room where he was, he would have cast everything to the winds and acted up to the infuriated speech which he had made that night, and which would be his destruction.

And that poor girl too, now his wife, what on earth would become of her? He had no power to guide, advise, or caution her; and all his old love for her had come back tenfold; for when he thought that all the world was against him, and that he was a lost, ruined, hunted hound, this woman had taken him back. He would have died for her now, restless, frantic, wild as she was. It was absolutely maddening. When he thought of her hopeless, helpless future, he left caring for himself at all. Men of his stamp are perfectly capable of going to any length for a woman who will prove her love by sticking to them in their darkest hour.

The poor fellow's heart had been softened once that day by this woman, and by the simple service which the priest had read to them about their mutual duties. It was softened again now when he thought of her. After his furious fit he became quieter, and thought now, not how he could help himself, but how he could help her. It seemed hopeless, and he said, "If God does not help us, there is none on earth who can."

He saw that Van Kenning meant him well—that he was forced to confess, even in his anger against him. He believed that Van Kenning had practised this ruse upon him to save him from being at the rising that night; but he well knew that Van Kenning never could get him out of the country, through the spies of Burgundy. When he was first seized by the Freemasons, even in his anger he was not very sorry to get out of a very troublesome business; but as you will have perceived by his

written arguments above, the more he looked at his own situation the less he liked it. He had taken the mercy of Burgundy, and had most assuredly violated his honour in the frantic speech of that night. All the Van Kennings in the world could not save him now; but his wife, how was she to be saved? Was it possible she would have missed him by now, and would be raising the mob? "If God does not help her, man cannot. Oh, God help me!"

It was the first prayer which the poor fellow had said for many a day.

God helped him in a very singular manner. He was walking up and down the room, with his swordless scabbard by his side (they had disarmed him) when he found it in his way, and taking it off angrily, he threw it away, saying—

"Lie there, scabbard of the dishonoured sword which killed Leon."

Poor Leon! he was a pretty lad, and it broke the heart of Margaret! All of a sudden there came a tingling in his ears and a creeping at the roots of his hair. Margaret, she should save her! If he could only get to Margaret; but how?

After a little thought, he knocked gently at the door, and a voice said—

"What do you want, Sir?"

"A little water. I am unarmed, and you need not fear me."

The door was at once opened, and old Gobet appeared.

"Gobet," said Van Dysart, "I wish to send a letter to Margaret Van Eyck."

Gobet nodded.

"I will give you this ring, which will make you rich for life."

"I want no rings," said Gobet. "One of my boys shall take it. I must not let you go, Van Dysart, but I will do anything short of that for you."

"Gobet," said Van Dysart, "will they rise to-night?"

"I do not know," said Gobet. "I would not be certain either way. It is raining, and so they will probably go home. But who can tell? Van Kenning is away to stop Spada with the young Duke's orders."

"What a young fool Burgundy is," remarked Van Dysart. "There is still time," he thought—probably one day gained.

"Gobet!"

"Sir."

"Have you seen my wife?"

"Being mewed up here with you, it is hardly likely," said Gobet: "but the guard at the door above tell me that you having

married her has made the people more mad for you than ever ; and that if you are missed to-morrow, Burgundy's house will go down. In the meantime, Van Kenning is away to stop the troops coming."

"What will you take to let me loose?" said Van Dysart.

"Sit down and write your letter," said Gobet, in a frightened whisper. "Are you mad?—you know the vow and the doom!"

Van Dysart knew it too well, and knew also that neither the vow nor the doom were idle words in those days. He dared go no further. He sat down and wrote :—

"MARGARET,

"I am in prison, and I fear that nothing can save me, although I am in prison among friendly people. Margaret ! as you hope for God's mercy, do this for me. The woman who in old times was called Martina is now my wedded wife, and is more dear to me than myself. You know her power among the people as well as I do your kindness to her. The murderer of Leon would not appeal to you if he had any one else to appeal to. Forgive the penitent thief, and save her.

"When she misses me she will rouse the people, and there will be bloodshed ; but she will go first, for young Burgundy is tired of her power among the people. Tell her that I am perfectly safe at present, and that she only has to keep quiet. After my death, Margaret, persuade her to enter a religious house if you can ; I think she would make a good nursing Sister. I really think that she would do well in the Beggenshof ; but at present get hold of her, and tell her to keep the people quiet.

"Van Kenning meant for the best when he did what he has done, but I am utterly ruined either way. While I am alive, Margaret, I do not ask you to forgive me, but try to do so after I am dead. Before all things, save her.

"VAN DYSART."

"Here is the letter," said he, and Gobet took it. "If there is a rising, Gobet, and I am not at the head of the people, I am ruined with them for ever, I suppose."

"You would have been, but for your marrying her," said Gobet. "One danger is that, you being missing—only a few knowing where you are, and they being forbidden by vows to tell—the people may get it into their heads that young Burgundy has got you. In which case——"

Gobet whistled.

"Well, I can do no more, Gobet. I will go to sleep."

"And pray to God," said Gobet.

"I have been doing that, the first time since my mother died," said Van Dysart.

Gobet shut and locked the door.

"He is worthy of living," said the old man, "but nothing on earth can save him now."

CHAPTER XXV.

AFTER having mewed up Van Dysart, Van Kenning had by no means done his night's work. He always used to say, like the Colonel Dobbin, that he cared more about other people's business than his own. There were two people—three besides Burgundy—of whom he was a little distrustful. Two of these people he could manage, the third was more difficult. The two people he could manage were Sister Priscilla and Father Peter: the one he could not manage with certainty was the Archbishop.

In common politeness he should have gone to the Archbishop first, but he thought that he would see Sister Priscilla and Father Peter out of the way first. He was a very excellent police magistrate, and these two worthy souls had given him a very great deal of political trouble on various occasions. They had both of them taken quasi regular vows in their different orders, but they were as free to come and go as they liked as any civilian of the lot. In fact, they did so come and go, like leal and trusty souls as they were. The Archbishop did not altogether like the "irregular orders," as he called them, but he was not strong enough, either in political power or in strength of character, to meddle much with them under the then Pope, who backed them up. At a very early period of this story we mentioned that Father Peter and Sister Priscilla were always going to appeal to the Pope against the house of Burgundy; and in fact they and their two orders as nearly repudiated the authority of the Archbishop as possible. Have we not seen the same thing in these Erastian times? Van Kenning thought of this, and saw his way.

Sister Priscilla and Father Peter were under the surveillance of the police now—in fact they had been so before, for there had been scandals. Father Peter and Sister Priscilla had watched a converted young man into a public-house nearly at midnight, and

had gone in after him and removed him by main force, and taken him home. In the fracas which ensued, Sister Priscilla had cuffed the landlord and told him that he was buying the souls of men for filthy lucre. Van Kenning fined her a florin for the assault, and the Archbishop set on her fifty paternosters, but she neither paid the one nor said the other. She was not a dangerous woman, and there was no trouble about her.

Father Peter also was not a very difficult man to deal with, as far as regarded the Archbishop. We wish it to be understood that no man ever stood in shoes, purer than Father Peter; and all we say of him is that in his perfect *insouciance* he had given rise on one occasion to a most tremendous scandal, entirely through his own almost babyish ignorance. We, of course, cannot tell the story: he was as innocent as a babe unborn, but no one believed him to be so; and we regret to say that, with a certain section of the population, the belief in his guilt made him more popular than he was before. Is it not so now? Are we any better than they were?

Van Kenning did not see much trouble with these two folks: he did not trouble Dogberry about them. He quietly wrote out warrants for their arrest, and stepped round to the room where Father Peter lodged, with two men-at-arms to see them executed.

Father Peter and Sister Priscilla were both there, as he knew from his information that they would be. They were both arrested at once, and he glanced over their papers.

"Hum! Ha! Petition of Sister Priscilla and Father Peter to the Pope about the misprisions of the bloody house of Burgundy. That will do. I will take these papers and show them to the Duke. Men-at-arms!"

"Your honour!"

"One of you keep the door and see that these people do not escape. One of you come here and witness what I am writing." And he wrote rapidly—

"This is to certify that I, Van Kenning, magistrate of this town, believing that a devilish plot was being organised by Father Peter and Sister Priscilla against the Duke of Burgundy, have, in virtue of my office, arrested both of them and seized their papers, in the presence of Max Hootman and Jan Platzman.

"This is also to testify that I, Van Kenning, have in the presence of Max Hootman and Jan Platzman, put these papers in a bag and sealed it with my own seal."

While he was burning his wax at the candle, and sealing up their papers, he looked at them and said, "I think I have

finished you two"; and even Sister Priscilla was cowed, for she knew that it was *death*, and she had wished to live a little longer.

Van Kenning was perfectly unmoved. He asked the two men-at-arms if they could write; whereon they looked at one another and laughed, as though Van Kenning was making a good joke. Then Van Kenning took the bag of papers, and having made the men-at-arms put their cross to the document, he walked away, leaving Father Peter and Sister Priscilla still dumb. *They* were out of the way; now for the Archbishop.

He went to his own house first, and there he deposited the papers and the document signed by the two men-at-arms. Then he went to the Archbishop, who had gone home and gone to sleep, at which he chuckled.

"I'll make him do anything if I can get him scared, just as he wakes up from his first sleep. I'll get him to sign anything."

It was very late even now, but Van Kenning had been often at the Archbishop's later than this on political matters. The Archbishop was perfectly used to be roused up in those troublous old times, for he was by no means a man who shirked his duty; and his presence had more than once stopped a riot, for the people loved him, and he loved them. This night was a dangerous one; and the Archbishop had only just said his prayers, and gone to sleep, when he was waked by his *concierge* unbarring the door. In two minutes Van Kenning was in his bedroom, and he was sitting up in bed.

"Are they up?" said the Archbishop, preparing to jump out of bed.

"No," said Van Kenning; "and they will not be up to-night."

"Thank God!" said the Archbishop. "I shall have some sleep."

"I have been working," said Van Kenning. "I have arrested Father Peter and Sister Priscilla."

"Good," said the Archbishop.

"You know, I suppose, that Van Dysart has married that Scotchwoman, the woman we used to call Martina?"

The Archbishop, without one word, deliberately got out of bed, and sat on the side of it in his shirt, scratching his head. We cannot describe this scene, because we have never seen an Archbishop sitting on the side of his bed, in his shirt. We have seen other men doing so, but never an Archbishop.

Neither can we repeat what the Archbishop said, because we

have never seen an Archbishop in a state of blind transcendent wonder, suddenly aroused from sleep. Van Kenning says that it was *something in the nature of an interjection*, but he goes no further.

"Monseigneur," he said, "just conceive the effect on your *prestige*, if I were to repeat that."

"Van Kenning," said the Archbishop, "it was forced out of me; you know I was in the army before I went into the Church. You are too good a gentleman to remember it. Tell me all about this business."

"I have not time," said Van Kenning. "I am away to young Burgundy; you will hear all soon. For political reasons, Archbishop, I want your word that you will not move against Van Dysart. I want your solemn word."

"I will most heartily give it, Van Kenning," said the Archbishop, with the interjection hanging over his head.

Van Kenning thought he would have had to argue, but the Archbishop saved him all trouble by his indiscretion.

Van Kenning was content, and wished the Archbishop good-night. Van Kenning said, "He is a gentleman, and will keep his word, priest as he is."

The Archbishop said to himself, when Van Kenning was gone: "He is a gentleman, and I need not be afraid. What could have induced me to use an oath?"

CHAPTER XXVI.

WALKING swiftly down the Canal, and knocking at the door of a little drinking house, Van Kenning immediately saw a light cross the key-hole, and became aware of a dead silence, of which he was not conscious before; for as he had come up to the door musing deeply, he had hardly noticed that there had been a sound of rather noisy talking within the house. He knocked again.

"Who is there?" cried a shrill voice; "it is after hours, and we will have no drunkards here. Go away."

"Hoogenstrasse," said Van Kenning.

The candle was at once set down, and the door was opened. Van Kenning found himself face to face with a fat, ill-looking woman, of about forty-five, who at once pulled him in and shut the door.

"Bless your honour," she said, in a whisper, "is anything wrong?"

Van Kenning put a piece of gold in her hand, and said, "Who is here?"

"Max Spits, Jan Doos, Jan Heffer; who is it that you want?" she said, curtsying.

"Not those," said Van Kenning, angrily. "I want no one drowned or assassinated. You know that. I mean——"

"I see," she said, not giving him time to answer. "Yes, Martin of Brussels is here; a safe man."

"Confound the Jezebel," said Van Kenning, "does she think that I want a love-letter carried?" For you see that Van Kenning as a police magistrate, and a rather radical politician, knew every scoundrel in the town. "I want a waterman, a man who can be trusted, either a Mason or a Milkenstrasse man, a man under the Milkenstrasse vows, if possible, but I would prefer a Mason."

"Why, look now," she said, quite radiant, "here is old Max Cramjens, not half drunk, but as good a man as ever—I'll send him out to you at once. Van Kenning."

"Well."

"There was a man killed here yesterday."

"I know."

"I shall be before you for it to-morrow."

"You will be before Councillor Baumgarten," said Van Kenning. "He takes my duty in my absence."

"But you will say a good word for me? you will say that my house was a most respectable one, and that the matter was an accident? you will say that I am a most respectable woman?"

"Woman, how could I? your house is a den of thieves and conspirators."

"Because you see if you can do nothing I shall have to say that you have been in my house very late on one or two occasions, and that you have been here to-night."

Van Kenning was perfectly furious when he saw how he was checkmated, but he held his tongue, and said he would do his best. The next minute he was standing by the side of an old man, Max Cramjens, who was loosing his boat.

When they were fairly afloat, and along the Canal, Van Kenning said, in the old man's ear, "The private water-gate of the palace"; and the old man rowed on.

"You know what I mean, Max?"

"Oh yes," said the old man, chuckling; "five gold pieces if I hold my tongue, and certain death if I say anything about it."

"Exactly," said Van Kenning, though he had not previously

assessed his fare at five gold pieces, but at one. Still, he was amused at the clever old Fleming having outwitted him and named the bargain, from which he could not depart : it was after all cheap, considering what was on hand. So he and the old man went slowly on among the silent canals, and he lay back in his boat dreaming of what might have been and of what never could be now, until the Canal got narrower and narrower, and at last the boat bumped against some steps, and he looked round at the high piled masonry, which sloped suddenly into the water on all sides, and wondered where he was. He soon remembered, and paying the old man five gold pieces, he ordered him off, and as soon as he was out of ear-shot took out a key—there were but three of them in existence, the Duke's, his own, and that of the Arbiter elegantiarum—and let himself into the Duke's garden. The Duke of Burgundy had such entire instinctive faith in Van Kenning, however, although he was the Duke's almost bitter opponent, that he had given him this key years before, and had said bravely, "I do not ask you to betray the people, but I ask you to serve me as far as your principles will allow you. This key might ruin me at any moment if the people took me unguarded ; and so I give it to you. There are but three, and I intrust one to the Tribune of the people." All this was buncombe, of course ; Van Kenning knew that it was, and the Duke knew that he knew it ; but they were in polite society, and did not laugh in one another's faces.

Since young Philip had grown to an age when he was able to notice anything, his father had the decency and chivalry to keep his house pure, and his vices out of sight. The frantic objurgations of Sister Priscilla, and the gentlemanlike rebukes of the Archbishop against the wickedness of the palace, were only half true ; there was evil and wickedness enough, and many people were in that palace who had better have been elsewhere. Things had been very bad there at one time, but they were mended out of respect to young Philippe le Bon, after his last arrival from Burgundy. The Arbiter elegantiarum had, in fact, found it dull ; and sitting out in the garden late on this night, he was intensely delighted and excited at hearing a key turned in the private door—a key which he knew must be Van Kenning's : he actually ran to meet him.

"Is it an insurrection ?" asked Arbiter.

"No ; but I want to see young Philip," said Van Kenning.

"You have disappointed me," said Arbiter ; "I was in hopes the dogs were up."

"They will be up too often for some of us, Signor Pirrio, if we

don't mind. I must see young Burgundy at once ; it is life and death."

The spaniel gave way to the mastiff at once ; and Van Kenning was led in quietly by a back door into a room where young Burgundy had fallen asleep, full dressed, on a couch, with a map of Flanders fallen from his hands. He did not wake as they came in ; and Van Kenning, turning to the Arbiter elegantiarum, said, sharply, "Shut the door when you go out, and leave the lad to me."

Arbiter departed, and Van Kenning sat down before the sleeping young man.

"Philip of Burgundy !" said Van Kenning, quietly.

The young man moved and half opened his eyes.

"Philip of Burgundy !"

The young man sat up with a wild stare.

"I dreamt that I had burnt Bruges," he said ; "and that afterwards I was in hell, and I saw Margaret Van Eyck in heaven, and called to her to plead for me ; but she said that I must stay in hell until the consequences of my own actions had ceased to have effect ; and that, she said, was to all eternity."

Van Kenning lived long enough to tremble whenever he recalled the young man's speech that night.

"Philip of Burgundy !" he said, with his usual dexterity, "she was right. The consequences of our own actions remain for ever ; and if you believe in the immortality of the soul, and the immortality of conscience, you must see that Margaret was right : the eternal consciousness of such a deed as you speak of would poison heaven and embitter hell."

"You scare me more than my dream did," said young Philip. "Who are you who sit there like a carrion crow ? By Heaven, it is Van Kenning ! Are they up ?"

"Thanks to me, not yet."

"Will Spada be in time from Dendermond ?"

"Certainly not, if I do not go out and act," said Van Kenning. "Are you quite awake ?"

There was no doubt about Philip's being awake now, and Van Kenning saw and remembered an evil cast in the corner of the eye of Philip the Good ; which was possibly the thing which made him shortly retire from politics, for it was not pleasant, and he wished to die in his bed ; now, however, he was master of the situation.

"I will tell you what I have done," he said ; "I have arrested Van Dysart."

"On what authority ?"

"Masonic,"

"That was a bold move ; and a good one," said Philip.
 "Where is he ?"

"Never mind, he is quite safe, I have done everything I can to quiet the people, and I have also arrested Father Peter and Sister Priscilla in my magisterial capacity. I want those two lives, my Lord."

"They are given frankly ; they are most excellent and admirable idiots, whose only fault is their dislike of our house. That is easy enough. Is there any other friend's life you want for your splendid services ?"

"Yes, I want Van Dysart's," said Van Kenning.

"You cannot have it, Van Kenning," said the young man coolly, and almost contemptuously. "Van Dysart must die ; he has had mercy once, and I cannot trust him ; he is a pleasant fellow, but he is in my way and he must go. I am very sorry to disoblige you, but he really must go."

If the young man had been angry, Van Kenning would have had more hope, but as it was, all hope seemed to be cut from under Van Dysart's feet ; the young Burgundy had got quite cool and business-like, and was playing with his gold chain.

"I appreciate your services, dear Van Kenning, as much as a man can, and I am sure you will laugh at me when I tell you, so much older and wiser than myself, that you allow your feelings towards Margaret Van Eyck to carry you away. That man must really go."

"Could not he be ransomed ?" said Van Kenning.

"Ransomed and banished ? Well, there is a way out of the difficulty in that way," said Philip the Good, not long out of his teens ; "but that is to be thought of. It would be cheaper in the end to have his head off. You know that he has been making inflammatory speeches this very night, and that he has married that lunatic woman ?"

"I know it," said Van Kenning.

"The man really must die. I am very sorry for him, but he really must. He ought to have died long ago, but every one who was bound against him is going for him, and I must be firm. It would be much better for Van Dysart to go to heaven, instead of remaining here."

There was something so very terrible to the kindly Van Kenning in the horrible selfishness of the young man, that he was dumb.

"I'll tell you what I will do," said young Burgundy. "If you will prevent a rising before Spada comes from Dendermond, you shall have your man for twenty thousand pieces, and banishment. Will that suit you ?"

"It is his fortune and part of mine," said Van Kenning, "but I will answer for the people being quiet, if you will follow my advice."

"Yes."

"Send me off to stop Spada ; take off the fish tax, and remain perfectly quiet."

"Why stop Spada ?"

"Because your force is not large enough. You would win in the end, and might burn the town down, but nothing could save *you*. Your dynasty might be saved, but you would go ; there would be no escape for you personally."

"Have it your own way," said Philip, laughing. "My father told me to trust you, and I do so. I only warn you that if any insurrection takes place, Van Dysart shall die. Go and stop Spada if you think it better, and I will, with your kind permission, go to sleep again ; I am terribly sleepy, and, according to your account, I shall wake with my throat cut. Good-night." And Philip was snoring on his couch before Van Kenning was out of the room.

Then he turned his head, like a fox peeping out of its hole ; then he listened, and heard Van Kenning barred out ; then he rose, and not daring to ring a bell, went into the guard-room and looked round. The men were most of them asleep, but two young men were awake, and keeping watch. "Where is the sergeant ?" he said, and they pointed to a heap of scarlet and blue clothes on a bench. The young Duke went to him, and the old soldier started up rubbing his eyes, and recognising his master—"I want you, William," said he, and led the way to his room. "I want something done, William."

"Yes, Duke."

"Are the streets quiet ?"

"Yes, Duke."

"Could you bring a man through them in safety ?"

"It depends. It is yet early in the night, and many are abroad. The clubs are sitting, but they must go to bed some time. Who is the man ?"

"Van Dysart."

"That will be dangerous, even in the early hours of the morning."

"The Freemasons have got him, but I want him here," said the Duke.

"I know," said the sergeant ; "we shall have to kill his guard, and that cannot be done without noise."

"Will money do it ?"

"I doubt it, my Lord; if we could tempt him out it would be as well, and catch him in the street! I don't see my way to it myself: we cannot have a disturbance until Spada comes; yet there is a chance if you care to risk it."

"What is that?"

"Let some of our young men break the place open from the rear, and let him out; it is not difficult, the place is weak and ill guarded. We could catch him after."

So it befell towards morning that Van Dysart was awakened by the working of crowbars at his window, and found himself released and in the street by unknown friends. He was told to run, and he ran; he was told to get into a boat, and he did so; he was told to get out of the boat, and he did so; and he was let into a garden, and was put by the Arbiter elegantiarum into the deepest cachot in all Burgundy's palace before he knew where he was. We said that no one of the general public ever saw him come out of his lodge again, and we were right. No one of mark save Burgundy and the Arbiter elegantiarum knew precisely where he was, and they were unlikely people to tell. In point of fact Van Dysart was not in the secret himself, but he very strongly suspected that he was in the hands of young Burgundy.

I happen to have been in one of the then most famous cachots in one of the most famous prisons in the whole world for a time, with the bolt shot on me, and so I can in some way gather what were Van Dysart's thoughts when he threw himself on his straw. I have been through it all myself (for five minutes), and so I may speak. The dungeon in which I was confined was at Mont St. Michel, in Normandy, a most famous dungeon, possibly engraved with the names of the prisoners who had been there before, but as it was too dark to see your hand before your face, I cannot say anything about the matter. It was the dungeon among dungeons, and when my companion on a bright happy summer's day shut me in, and shot the bolt on me, I understood it all,—I knew what the old style of imprisonment meant in five minutes.

The horror of darkness first, for the darkness was like a velvet mask on one's eyes; then the thought that one was caged and powerless, and could not move to help oneself; then the horrible thought that all who loved you would think that you had deserted them—your wife first, and your friends afterwards. In the cachot where I was there was no light at all as far as I could see. I had room to turn round, but little more; I could stand upright and walk eight feet one way and six another; and

I was to stay here twenty-five years, hopeless, helpless, bookless, letting the world go spin while I spent a worthless life in the straw in this dark hole.

I wish to notice that my cachot was not the celebrated Cage de Mont St. Michel. Van Dysart was thrust into such a place, without the least hope of release except by death, very likely accompanied by torture.

Now, "solitary confinement" means absolute solitude with plenty of air, plenty of light, and plenty to eat, with Low-church tracts thrown in as a mental pabulum. Many men not liable to congenital tubercular disease of the brain, go mad under this treatment; it is quite possible that the High Church will say that it is the Low Church tracts which cause this result; but the result is the same. Solitary confinement in old time meant utter silence, darkness, and a filthiness which cannot be detailed. We have been in British dungeons at Pentonville, and we have been bolted into a cell at Mont St. Michel, and so we can judge between the two. The dandy Van Dysart had got into one of the old mediæval prisons, from which there was no exit.

Yet—yet there was something good in the rascal. He knew that he must die, that was as plain as the nose on his face, but he had held his life in his hand so long that he had never feared death at all. Men of his stamp never do fear death; if men like he feared death, the country to which they belonged would cease to exist as a military power. But he feared death now for the first time in his life. One whom he had most deeply wronged had come to him when all the world was against him, had laid her head on his bosom, and had forgiven him. He had for her now a love which might be violent and wild, but which was true, and which would last his life. She was left utterly without guidance while he was mewed up here in the black darkness which we have seen, cursing in his straw. It had all come to this; a newer, brighter, and better life had dawned upon him, in which she had part; he was going to live a new life with her. The Archbishop and Sister Priscilla and Father Peter would show them the way to God; he would have absolution for the murder of Leon; he would be utterly humble to all. His wife might live a religious life if she chose, so long as she stayed with him; they would both give themselves to good works and to labours of love, if God would let him out of this horrible black dungeon in time to save her, for he knew that when she missed him she would rouse the people.

Black darkness, like a velvet mask across one's face, added to that despair; added to that a mad anxiety for one suddenly grown

dearer than gold ; added to that the consciousness that she was in danger, and that he could not help her. These thoughts were too strong for Van Dysart's brain, and in his madness he cast himself three times violently against the door of his dungeon, and in his third terrible effort struck his head, and fell over almost unconscious into his straw.

I say unconscious, but that is scarcely true ; he was delirious, but hardly unconscious. The jailor, who had been dozing, was awakened by his last mad effort, and found him lying in the straw with his head bleeding. The jailor had seen the same kind of thing before, but Van Dysart being a man of mark, must be attended to. He washed Van Dysart's head, and while he was doing so Van Dysart said—

"I have been mad, and have knocked myself about. I am dazed now ; I could not fly to-night. I will give you eight thousand pieces of gold if you will get me out to-morrow night, and I will see that you get safe into France with the money."


"I could not do it to-morrow night, for Spada will be here, they say. Cannot you get away now and give me the money ?"

"Can you do it now ?"

"I can do it perfectly well if you can guarantee me the money. The Arbiter's boat is in the canal ; but you must change your clothes. We must be very quick ; take off yours, and I will fetch you others. I make my fortune by this, though I risk my life !"

Van Dysart stripped while the man went away, but he was quite delirious ; the last effort he had made in speaking to the jailor had been too much for him, and when the jailor came in with the fresh clothes, Van Dysart was standing in his shirt bowing. The jailor saw that the man was for a time mad. He dressed Van Dysart in common clothes, and then he dexterously stuffed Van Dysart's clothes with straw, and threw them down for the benefit of the deputy jailor. Van Dysart's clothes stuffed with straw, looked in the darkness so uncommonly like Van Dysart himself asleep, that the jailor calculated that there were a clear twenty-four hours between himself and destruction.

The boatmen of the Arbiter elegantiarum were very much amused by a young man in a high state of intoxication being brought down to them by the head jailor ; they did not recognise Van Dysart at all, and rowed away where they were told. The head jailor got out with the drunken young gentleman on a certain quay, and the boat was sent back.



CHAPTER XXVII.

PHILIP OF BURGUNDY lay in his bed very late on that day, and when he awoke he lay thinking. And he thought mainly about Van Dysart; his thoughts took this line.

"The man is fearfully dangerous, and I am practically alone. Would it not be better to buy him up now, and ruin him afterwards? Van Kenning will pay the money for his freedom or his banishment: it would be much better to let him go free now.

"I am supported by no one: I cannot in any way trust Spada. Devil take the man, I wish I had never seen him. I know that he will play me some dog's trick at Dendermond, and now Van Kenning has my leave to stop the troops at Dendermond, I shall have my throat cut among them: the dogs! they shall all die, but I will secure myself anyhow. I have Van Dysart, I will make terms with him. I will go to him, he knows that his position is perfectly helpless, and will treat cheaply: he knows well where he is, and that he must bind himself to my interests or die in the straw. I am master of the situation still, now I have got him in prison. That was very clever of me.

"I thought that his murder of Leon would have set him wrong with the people, but this marriage of his with that lunatic Scotch-woman seems to have set him right again. The dogs! the hounds! they shall be plagued for this when I am at liberty. I will make terms with Van Dysart and ruin them all."

So he lay thinking, when his boy came in and asked him if he could see John Van Eyck. He exclaimed "The very ——!" but stopped himself and said, "Show him in."

In came John Van Eyck in his most beautiful clothes, and in the most charming temper. Philip of Burgundy was very glad to see him, and he was naturally glad to see Burgundy, he was always glad to see great people. Burgundy rose in his bed, and put the case before him, and John listened attentively. I have stated the case before, and Burgundy stated it again. I will only use his concluding words.

"Every one who vowed his ruin for the murder of Leon has now gone for him. Margaret, your brother, Spada, this mad priest and the mad nun, Van Kenning, and the lunatic whom Van Dysart has married. He is horribly dangerous now, and I tremble when I think that I have him here."

"He is in custody of the Freemasons," said John Van Eyck.

"He is in mine," said young Burgundy, "and I am not at all

sure that I will not give him a sleeping draught from which he will never awaken."

"I would not do that," said John Van Eyck, in a business-like tone. "I would treat with him; I would buy him. You are not very rich just now, and this salt-fish tax must not be imposed: it will not do. But Van Kenning would pay his ransom for my sister's sake."

Even Burgundy the younger thought to himself, "You *are* a mean hound." But John Van Eyck was the only friend he had, and so he kept his thoughts to himself.

"Could he stop the people if he was bought?" asked Burgundy.

"Most certainly, now that he has married this woman: it will take the people's heart," said John Van Eyck.

"Do you think that we are in danger?" said Burgundy.

"It is not a question of danger. If you have allowed Van Kenning to stop the troops from Dendermond we are utterly ruined, neither you nor I shall be alive to-morrow morning. This madwoman is going up and down the town seeking her husband, and the streets are swarming. I suppose you know that the hands are not at work?"

"The devil! Then it is a matter of hours."

"It is a matter of minutes," said John Van Eyck; "unless you can buy Van Dysart, you and I must go."

"Where?" said Burgundy.

"To death," said John Van Eyck.

"Come with me to his prison," said Philip of Burgundy. "There may be time." And he quickly dressed himself and hurried away. The Seneschal was sent for the chief man-at-arms, and the chief man-at-arms was told to go seek the head jailor. But the chief man-at-arms said that the head jailor had left in the night, and that he was in charge. This fact made both Philip of Burgundy and John Van Eyck very uneasy, though they would have been puzzled to tell you why. The head man-at-arms was asked, did he know where Van Dysart was, and he replied yes, and showed them the way.

"I should like my orders, my Lord of Burgundy," he said.

"As to what?" said Philip, sharply.

"As to whether I should assassinate him when the people get in, or let him go free."

"What do you mean?"

"Only, my Lord, that the people are up, and that unless the troops arrive from Dendermond we are entirely without protection. Whether the head jailor has turned traitor or not I cannot say,

but already the people have broken into the Masons' Lodge and have not found Van Dysart. Hence they will naturally come here next, and we are utterly defenceless. Could not you, my Lord Duke, withdraw quietly with your men-at-arms and wait for better times ? ”

“ I will answer that in half an hour,” said Philip. “ Show me his cell ; give me your lanthorn, and turn back.” The man did so, and the young Duke and John Van Eyck stood together in the black darkness of the corridor which led to Van Dysart's dungeon.

“ It gets dangerous,” said Burgundy.

“ Most dangerous,” said John Van Eyck. “ Unless we can treat with him, all is lost.”

“ Come with me, John. I am no coward, but he might assassinate me. I was a madman to yield to Van Kenning.”

These cachots are very easily opened from the outside, but not so easily opened from the inside. All that young Burgundy had to do was to draw back a heavy iron bolt, and so he and John Van Eyck were in the presence of the sleeping Van Dysart.

“ Hold up your lanthorn, Van Eyck,” said Burgundy. “ There he is in the straw. Hola ! ho ! Van Dysart, here are friends.” There was no answer.

“ Is he dead ? ” asked Burgundy, in a hissing whisper. “ That might be——”

“ It is worse than that, my Lord,” said John Van Eyck, who had bent over the form in the straw ; “ he is gone, and he is loose.”

Burgundy uttered an awful oath, which he ultimately kept. Bruges remembers it to this day.

“ Here,” said John Van Eyck, “ are his clothes stuffed with straw, and he and your jailor are away together.”

“ What do you recommend now ? ” said Burgundy.

“ Suicide, or flight,” said John Van Eyck. “ It is all over now. We are completely ruined. Nothing in heaven or earth can save us now. We are utterly undone.”

“ Can we fly ? ” said Burgundy.

“ We will try at all events,” said John Van Eyck. “ Catch your man-at-arms, and make him take us to the canal.”

The thing was easily done, and the prince and John Van Eyck were safely in the Van Eycks' house without the least *exposé* towards the people. The last orders of Burgundy were to defend the palace as long as possible. John Van Eyck was despatched to Dendermond to hurry the troops up.

Spada was sent to fetch them, Van Kenning to stop them, and

now John Van Eyck was sent to hurry them up. The thing was not incredible at all. We see the same thing every month with our own Government. We certainly get more cackle for our money, but otherwise we cannot see that we have improved in any way on the mediæval plan. We talk more certainly, but we do little save destructive internal "reforms." This however is apart the purpose. Spada was a man who listened to every one and then took his own line. He never moved a foot until he had heard Van Kenning and John Van Eyck. Then he said, that on the whole he would abide by his original orders, on his own responsibility, and taking his men, he marched on the city full speed by the canal.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE people were up, of that there was no doubt at all; the mills were silent and the streets were swarming, and there was not one governing head left in the town, unless it was that of the Archbishop.

Looking at the history of *émeutes*, successful or unsuccessful, you invariably see one thing, that however mad the mob may be, the clamour is always for a leader, for an autocrat, for a dictator of the old Roman type. There is an instinct in humanity (democratic humanity) towards "Cæsarism" which is as strong under Gambetta as under Julius Cæsar. "Pure" Democracy must always end so. The "hour and the man" are facts which are always turning up again and again in the shape of presidents of republics or emperors of free states. The Mob never have led yet, but must always have a leader for the time being to lead them, and in a "pure" democracy the mob are rather powerful. On this occasion, finding no leader they were led by a half-mad woman, the Macdonald woman, who was now Frau Van Dysart. They had no other leader, but she was enough for them: she had lived a very wild strange life, but the universal opinion about her among the lower orders was that she was perfectly pure, save with Van Dysart, who had now married her. That was the opinion of the people now, and it does not matter whether it was true or false. I know nothing about the life of the woman; she was considered fit to walk with Sister Priscilla and Margaret Van Eyck in the great picture, and so it is possible that Margaret, a spotless woman, was inclined to think with the people. However, this

is most dangerous ground, and when one knows nothing one had better say as little as possible.

Frau Van Dysart missed her husband, and got wild. She searched for him all over the town very quietly, but she could get no intelligence. She thought of old Gobet, and went to him. Gobet would tell her nothing. She went to Margaret Van Eyck, but Margaret knew nothing. She went to the house where Sister Priscilla had lodged, but the landlady rated her: then she went to Van Kenning's house, but Van Kenning was away. She had lost her husband just as she had won him, and she was infuriated. She was perfectly certain, through a kind of instinct, that Burgundy had got him, and she made up her mind to rouse the people and get him back. She was as mad and as cool as Charlotte Corday.

She went to the head of the trades unions, Hans Polders, who was sitting up in his shirt and breeches awaiting news, and she sat beside him, without saying one word, for she was determined that he should begin. He began.

"Where is your husband?"

"Van Dysart? Oh, he is either in the dungeons of the Freemasons, or in the dungeons of Burgundy. I think that Burgundy has got him."

"We must have him," said Hans Polders. "We cannot do without him. Woman, you have been a great sinner, and the republic of the future requires virtue."

"I deny that I have been a great sinner; I have been misunderstood, I have been maligned. I want to save the State, and to save my husband."

"Woman," said Hans Polders, a grey-headed, square-faced old Dutchman, "I hope your words are true. Let us forget everything, but we must have Van Dysart, your husband. It seems perfectly inconceivable, but Van Kenning has deserted."

"It is false, Hans Polders, it is false. Van Kenning would never desert. Hans Polders, you loved your wife, I remember you walking with her under the lime trees."

Hans Polders said, "I loved her, and I shall follow her soon to God."

"I love Van Dysart as you loved her. I know that Burgundy is at the bottom of the matter, and I must see him again or I shall die. Tell me what I am to do."

"Go out and raise the mob. Get Sister Priscilla and Father Peter to come with you."

"They are in prison," said Van Dysart's wife.

"Oh," said Hans Polders, "then go out alone. Demand

him first of the Freemasons, and then make them sack Burgundy's palace. I will go with you, Frau, to share the responsibility, but I could not rouse the men as you could."

The surging crowds were out in the streets, for it was now six o'clock in the afternoon, and they had found a leader—a leader with a head too, half-mad as she was: the leader was Frau Van Dysart; behind her was old Hans Polders, a man trusted by every one.

It is a perfect mistake to suppose that the very best oratory affects directly more than two or three hundred persons at once. The reporters certainly convey speeches to two or three hundred thousand people at once, but it is a great question whether more than a hundred people ever heard a great speech at once. Frau Van Dysart made no speech to the mob which gathered round her; she only said the same thing over and over again to every one who approached her: "My husband has been taken from me, either by the Freemasons or by Burgundy! We must rise to-night, and we cannot rise without him."

She told Margaret that she must have said this above one hundred times, when a young man came to her, cap in hand, and said most respectfully—

"Madam, we have entered both the lodges of the Freemasons, and Van Dysart is not in either. Madam, we believe that he is in the house of the dog, young Burgundy! Will you lead us?"

"I will lead you, of course. Hans Polders, get your men in order, we will storm the palace; but I will not have any Vandalism or brutality. I will be obeyed in this. Go to the rear, Hans Polders, and send the strongest and most respectable young men up to surround me: organise quickly, for we may have the mercenaries on us before we have done our work. You had better give the signal for marching!"

And so the Scotchwoman stood alone in the street, but not for long.

The column was forming, and every one fell back for a time; but the organisation was very good, and it was not long before Hans Polders had selected his young men, and one of them bounded up, and stood beside her, but slightly in her rear. Then they came by threes and by fours until they made nearly a hundred. Then she turned and looked on them, and said—

"You are very good to me. We must all die over this affair; Burgundy will never forgive it. Any gentleman who wishes to withdraw, had better do so now. We are on a hopeless errand, those whose hearts are not in it should withdraw now!"

Not one man flinched, and Holland and Belgium are free to

this day. I thought of this scene (after reading Motley) when a Dutch officer told me, at Rotterdam, last August, that the dykes were all mined, and that they would flood and ruin the country sooner than yield either to France or Prussia. Let us do homage to the bravest and most persistent people in the world. The Flemings (if we call them so) followed Frau Van Dysart to the palace of young Burgundy with the greatest gallantry. Of the six young men who surrounded her, there was not one who did not know that he was as good as dead, for the house of Burgundy never forgave.

She marched at the head of these young men, and there was only one episode : a very beautiful girl came out from among the crowd and stayed her sweetheart for an instant. It was only to tell him to go through with the work like a man ; and she, with the coarse manners of her age, put her hand inside his tunic and laid a lock of her hair on his left breast for a spell.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE young men, with Frau Van Dysart at their head, stood before the door of the palace for a short time, and then, at old Polders' order, they burst down the maindoor, and looked into the hall. The truth is that they were entirely afraid to move, the prestige of Burgundy was so great, and the vengeance of that house had been so terrible, that they were cowed, and those who had helped to break in the door, considered that they had done their duty, and withdrew without orders to the rear ranks.

Most certainly the palace of Burgundy never looked so terrible as it did now, for there was not a soul to be seen. And at this terrible spectacle the front ranks pressed back on the rear ranks with the true cowardice of a mob. "We are betrayed !" cried a young man in the front row, whereupon Van Dysart's wife walked coolly into the empty hall by herself ; the mob came afterwards, headed by old Polders.

Frau Van Dysart was walking up the stairs, when she was met by the Arbiter elegantiarum, who, with the courage of his race, asked her where she wished to go. The mob, seeing a woman before them, took courage and closed in behind her.

"I want my husband, Van Dysart !" she said ; "you have him here."

"He is not here, Madam ; he has disappeared, and the jailor

of the palace has disappeared also. I will, if you choose, show you his clothes, but I cannot show you himself."

Old Polders said, "This dog is lying!"

"Can I see the Duke?" said Frau Van Dysart.

"Madam, I have not the least idea where the Duke is."

Those were the last words he ever spoke, for Petronius Arbiter can die silently, and will if it comes to his turn. The woman Van Dysart was lost among the sudden and furious rush of the mob. The devil was loose among them suddenly. The Arbiter saw that the devil of extreme democracy had broken loose, and that he, at all events, was a dead man. I believe that he thought of saving himself at first, but saw that it was quite hopeless. He went up two stairs and drew his sword. The front rank, pressed on from behind, were thrown against him, and he killed three of them before he was left a mere heap of flesh on the staircase. War is very bad, no one will deny that, but war with all its brutalities and horrors has something honest, and, if we may be allowed to say so, rhythmical about it. Your soldier is not such a bad fellow, even after he has been forced to burn Bazeilles; but mob war is quite another matter. Arbiter elegantiarum was down, and the mob were in the palace of Burgundy without a leader.

They behaved as usual; the best young men tried to steady them, and there was bloodshed between the more honest of them, and the rascals who poured in after them, but it was of no use; there was no leader, neither a Van Dysart, a Spada, or a Van Kenning—not even Polders, or Frau Van Dysart; they had fled to the dungeons in hopes of finding Van Dysart. They found his clothes, and his clothes only, and while they were on their quest, the house of Burgundy had been sacked from top to bottom. Half-a-dozen of the bravest young men were with them, and stayed by them through all which followed; and they were so mad and so furious, that it is very doubtful whether the appearance of Van Dysart himself would have done any good.

"He has been spirited away," said Frau Van Dysart. "Where is he, and what are we to do now?"

"Wait here," said Polders. And the young men agreed with him.

"We must reorganise before we can fight these dogs," said the leading young man. "We must reorganise; for my part, I declare for the Duke and liberty."

"Will he give it?" growled Polders.

"If we hold together we can force him," said the leading young man.

"Hold together?" said Polders. "We have done that to-night, and there are six of us left; these dogs of clubmen will ruin the freedom of the country; in the devil's name listen and hide."

"What is that noise?" said Frau Van Dysart, seizing Polders by the arm; "is it thunder?"

"No!" he said coolly, "it is only musketry and artillery, which God has ordained to destroy, in the long run, the domination of cities over provinces. The end will not be in our time; but meanwhile it is evident that Spada has arrived, and that the house of Burgundy is saved once more by a cut-throat. Hark! how the young bitch barks; she will bark louder soon. Gunpowder will make real democracy impossible."

CHAPTER XXX.

WHAT truth there was in old Polders' last remark readers must settle for themselves. This is a work of fiction, not of politics. The noise made by Spada's troops in the streets would sound very poor in the ears of a man in whose ears the ghastly rattle of the battle of Sedan is still ringing, but it was terrible enough to Frau Van Dysart, to old Polders, and to the six young men who were with them. Musketry was then as strange in the streets of Ghent, as it is now in the streets of London:—God save our mob from knowing the effects of it! Van Kenning saw the effects of it for the first time in a crowded street, and he saw at once that the governing power, the power with the resources and arms of the nation in their hands, could hold the towns for all time. Old Polders saw the same thing from a different point of view.

Spada, the Italian bully, had hurried the mercenaries on with their new arms just in time for the great riots, or to be more correct a little too late as far as the sacking of Burgundy's palace was concerned. Van Kenning and Spada had had an excessively strong argument about bringing up the mercenaries at all, but Spada had prevailed by saying that they might come to Ghent either with the Duke's leave or without it. Van Kenning saw that it was useless to argue, and came back with Spada, saying, "Your rascals will follow you; I'll be hanged if mine will follow me."

When they came to the bridge over the Great Canal they recon-

noitered, and met with the usual fate of reconnoiterers, war correspondents or others, that is to say, they got most dreadfully lied to. But as they were both too old to believe any one, they pushed on, and came over the bridge into the town—Van Kenning and Spada being the only men on horseback among fifteen thousand. They were stopped by a young man, who ran up to them and told them as much as he knew of the truth, which was not much. Burgundy's palace was on fire, and the mob were sacking the house of the Van Eycks; also that Philip of Burgundy had been killed.

These things were utterly untrue; and, indeed, they did not believe them. But Van Kenning said to Spada, "We must push on and act."

"We have no authority," said Spada. "Burgundy is my master, and Burgundy is not here. Will you take the responsibility as councillor, for I do not want to be scapegoat. You are a gentleman, and I will trust you; if you want the riot put down, I can do it for you, but I must have authority."

Van Kenning said very slowly, "*Can you do it?*"

Spada said, "I can do it in ten minutes."

Van Kenning called up the young man who had scouted out to meet them.

"What authority have you that the house of Hubert Van Eyck has been sacked?"

"They have broken the doors, because they say that Burgundy and Van Dysart, whom no one can find, are there." An entire lie, but not so very bad for an amateur war correspondent.

Van Kenning turned to Spada—

"I give you authority to act," he said. "My head is safer than yours. This rascal is lying; but Margaret is in danger. Act."

"You must give it me in writing, Van Kenning."

Van Kenning got off his horse, and wrote on the saddle:—

"What is done in the town of Ghent for the next three days is done by authority of me, Van Kenning, Alderman."

"That is right," said Spada; "now, where are you going?"

"I was going to get on horseback again," said Van Kenning.

"Take my advice, and don't do anything of the kind. Send your horse to the rear with mine, and walk with me. Have you ever heard musketry?"

"Never."

"Don't lose your nerve, for I shall want you for political purposes possibly. Keep to my left, and touch me with your elbow."

The horses were sent to the rear, and they began their terrible march towards the Judenstrasse.

"God!" said Van Kenning; "are you mad?"

"No, I am only a soldier," said Spada. "*Do not say another word, but trust to me. You do not know the power of musketry.*"

So this dreadful company, fifteen thousand strong, passed into the Judenstrasse, and at their head walked Van Kenning and Spada. Spada said to him—

"You must never employ cavalry in a street if you can avoid it. Are you still resolute?"

"I am perfectly so," said Van Kenning. "I have trusted these fellows too long, and they have betrayed me. Are you sure that you are right in marching down the Judenstrasse? Could you not even now clear it by bringing up your cavalry from the rear?"

And Spada said—"Hold your tongue, good and very dear man. The councillor has handed his authority to the soldier. Can you use your sword?"

"Yes, well," said Van Kenning.

"Get in behind these pikes if they charge, and keep close to me. Don't lose the touch of my elbow, for you are a good man, and we are on a heavy business. We are saving the State, man, and my grandmother would fight in the cause."

"I would sooner fight for a woman," said Van Kenning.

"I have fought for too many," said Spada, "and I have no wife now. Brace yourself up, man, and behave *like* a man. Here is the Judenstrasse, and here they are in the place I intended to catch them."

It was a fact; close to the Duke's palace the mob were out, and were barring the road, armed with pikes and halberts—indeed, with nearly everything they could lay their hands on. They were under the delusion that they could oppose regular troops, and they were utterly unaware that the good Van Kenning was at their head with Spada.

Van Kenning said, "Let me go forward; I can send these fools home."

"To come out again," said Spada. "No, Van Kenning, I must give them their lesson. You have authorised me to act."

"But the widows and orphans?" said Van Kenning.

"There will be more widows and orphans than those of my making, unless these people are taught law by force," said Spada. "What do you say?—not that it matters."

"Let me go," said Van Kenning; and he went at once, and

spoke to the front ranks of the people ; but they had only one story for him, that they were betrayed.

"You betray yourselves," said Van Kenning. "Have I not loved you?—have I not fought the house of Burgundy for you? Is there a single man here who dares say that I have not been a true and good friend to the people?"

There was not one.

"I am here at the head of Burgundy's mercenaries, and why? Because I cannot trust you in any way. We must have law and order, and you will not allow us to have it. I have always pled for the people—I am of the people myself; but these new ideas of yours, that property is never to accumulate, but to be equalised, are absolutely idiotic. I am not rich, but am well to do. Because I had a named father before me, is that a reason why I should lose your confidence?"

"No! no!"

"Burgundy again!"—here there were clamorous universal cries of "Where is Burgundy? Where is Van Dysart?"

Van Kenning got no hearing after this, and was brought back and put behind the first company of the mercenaries by Spada; it was obvious that the people would not listen.

In this last painful and horrible year it is perfectly obvious that a German has only to come into one end of a field to make a Frenchman run out at the other. It was not so with regard to Burgundy's mercenaries, and the men of the Ghent and Bruges trades unions; they advanced and prepared to fight, when they had the remarkable experience of musketry.

Spada knew that they would fight, and was ready for them.

Van Kenning suddenly left Spada, and ran out between the mercenaries and the mob.

"Madman!" cried Spada; "I am going to fire."

"Hear one word, Spada," shouted Van Kenning.

But it was too late; the last words which Spada had time to say were, "Lie down!" then the never forgotten rattle came.

The noise frightened the mob more than its effect, for there were but three killed and six wounded in the whole street. Unlike the present Parisian mob, they were totally ignorant of the effect of musketry with low aiming. After three or four were killed they rallied again, and charged with pikes; but Spada was far too good a general to allow them to get at his men. He retreated right and left, and unmasked his artillery. Six guns in that narrow street! The effect on that crowded mass was simply horrible. Spada, with his splendid audacity, let the crowd approach within fifty yards before he opened fire at all, then (as he

calculated afterwards) each shot killed ten men. In five minutes the street was piled with dead, the mob had fled into the side streets, and he was left, with a brother Italian captain, wondering what he was to do next.

"Antonio," he said, "what on earth are we to do with these Flemings? I have no power to act, for Van Kenning is killed, and I only acted under instructions from him."

"Sack the town," said Antonio of Florence.

"But I don't know where the Duke of Burgundy is," said Spada. "I should not like to do it without his leave, yet——"

"You had much better sack the town," said Antonio. "Young Burgundy is a dog, and will throw you overboard for this. Let us sack the town, and make an anabasis to Dendermond. Let us erect a free state there on strictly Catholic principles. The Holy Father would buy us up at five thousand guilders a man."

"You are a very clever rogue, my dear," said Spada, "even for an Italian; but if I could find young Burgundy, I could get more money out of him."

"You are the oldest and wisest rogue of the two," said Antonio of Florence. "Have your own way. See there in the street. There is a man who is not dead."

In fact, Van Kenning was by no means dead, but had lain down when Spada called to him, and had continued to lie down till it was all over. He approached them, grimly.

"My dear Van Kenning," said Spada, "you, of all others, are the very man we want."

"I should think so," said Van Kenning, "after the way you have been hammering at me with your infernal artillery. You told me to lie down, and I have had to lie down for twenty minutes under three dead young men. What do you mean by it?"

"I mean that I want your advice and assistance."

"My advice to you is to take care what you are about with young Burgundy, for when he gets his next panic on he will sacrifice you to the people; and as for assistance, I can only give it in the form of advice. Move your men straight up the Judenstrasse, and billet them in the square in front of the Archbishop's palace. Why? He says, why? does this Italian. Why?—because you must have the Archbishop with you instantly. The clergy manage the women, and the women manage the men. You must manage the Archbishop at once."

"I see," said Spada.

"Are you anything of a surgeon?" said Van Kenning.

"Pretty good," said Spada.

"Strip me, then, and look at me, for I am badly hurt."

It was true. Van Kenning had a blue lump on his deltoid, which was undoubtedly a bullet. Spada most dexterously cut it out for him, and bound it up.

"You are a fine made man," he said, when he had bound up the arm. "I should not like to take a buffet from you."

"Others are of the same opinion," said Van Kenning.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE Archbishop declared to his dying day that he would not go through that night again for the price of a Cardinal's hat and the prospect of a Papacy (he got the hat but not the tiara). It was comparatively early in the evening when the first two lunatics arrived in the persons of Father Peter and Sister Priscilla, demanding sanctuary. The Archbishop pointed out to them that he had no rights of sanctuary out of the cathedral, that they had been imprisoned by a magistrate, and that he should get himself into trouble. But Sister Priscilla was perfectly emphatic about the rights of sanctuary, and the Archbishop yielded, pointing out to her that he had no power at all. After accepting Sister Priscilla, it did not much matter whether Father Peter was thrown into the bargain, and so *he* stayed.

The next arrivals were the Van Eycks, including Marie, John's wife, who thought that they were safer there in the present state of the town than elsewhere. The embroglio in the town was over when they came, and they had heard the musketry and artillery for the first time in their lives.

There was a low knocking at the door, and they went down together to open it. The Archbishop opened it with his own hand, keeping the servants back, for he was not sure what was happening, and was perfectly willing to die first. When he saw who were before the door, he uttered a glad cry, and ran out.

It was Frau Van Dysart leading her husband.

"I have found him," she said. "I roused the people, but I think they will be quiet now. We want sanctuary for this night, Archbishop, and Margaret is away."

"Margaret is here," she said, coming forward and kissing her; whereby we may conclude that Frau Van Dysart was not so black as she was painted.

In the night, very late, they heard the troops coming into the square ; but the politic Archbishop would make no demonstration. At the earliest dawn of morning it was evident, from the hum and stir in the great square, that something had happened. The Archbishop looked out of window, and saw what *had* happened—the mob had fraternised with the troops. The Archbishop was a little uncomfortable at first ; but there were loud cries getting up of “Long live the Archbishop !” It was time for a demonstration, and the Archbishop, so well versed in ecclesiastical affairs, aroused himself to the situation. He awakened his guests.

The great doors of his palace were thrown open suddenly, and on the steps came the Archbishop, Sister Priscilla, Father Peter, Hubert, John, Margaret, and Marie Van Eyck, Van Dysart and his wife—a noble group. The Archbishop, with archiepiscopal humility, stood on the lowest step, nearest to the seething and roaring crowd of mixed soldiers and workmen which now filled the square. In a moment three men were seen pushing their way through the crowd, and then the group on the steps were joined by Van Kenning, Spada, and old Polders. So all our friends were ranked together before the people, and the people knew that their best friends were before them.

Old Polders held up his hand, and the crowd was silent. “My friends,” he said, “we want diligence, order, and law, and I think we can get it ; the people here on these steps have not behaved ill to you.”

There was a cry of “Spada !”

“Spada is a mercenary ; Spada is a man who is trained to war : if you would train yourselves to war like these Italians we should have a great Dutch Republic, which the whole world could not meddle with. Spada did his duty according to his lights ; let him be, let him be. I am a good patriot, and I say, let the work of last night be forgotten. I am no lover of the house of Burgundy, as you well know, but as long as we cannot lead ourselves, we had better get the house of Burgundy to lead us. The time will come when we may be able to lead ourselves, but at present let us keep with that house, and educate ourselves to freedom.”

“But Burgundy is fled to his father,” said one man in the crowd, and the cry was taken up by the crowd. “Where is young Burgundy ?” was the cry.

A voice rang through the crowd. “I am here :” and they all looked up.

On the top step, above all our friends, stood Philippe le Bon in scarlet and gold, alone, and undaunted, a magnificent figure standing out before the dark archway of the door. The splendour

of his dress and the beauty of his carriage awed the mob into utter silence, during which he said—

“I am here, and I mean to stay here till justice shall be done to the people, but if the people do not do justice to me let them beware.”

And so he turned and passed under the arch, and the people cheered madly; our friends, from whom we have to part now, followed him; the Archbishop brought up the rear with Sister Priscilla and Father Peter, and Sister Priscilla suggested that the Archbishop should bless the crowd. The Archbishop turned and did so, and since benedictions were invented we doubt whether any was ever so hearty as his.

In the hall Van Kenning came against the Archbishop.

“I had no idea that you had him here,” said Van Kenning.

“I daresay not,” said the Archbishop, “but when you repent, and enter the church, I will explain to you the use of *coups de théâtre*.”


Margaret got against Philippe le Bon, and she laid her arm on his shoulder.

“My Lord, you will forgive Ghent?”

“Never,” he hissed through his teeth; and he kept his word like a true Burgundian.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN Scotland, in Perthshire, in Glenlyon, there lived a lady and gentleman who called themselves Macdonalds, although the gentleman confessed himself to be a Fleming of noble birth, who had taken his wife's name as being nobler than his own. They always told their neighbours that they had come to live among the Macgregors because his wife was not at one with her clan, and it was not long before gossips from the Macgregors and gossips from the Macdonalds met and remembered that the beauty of the Macdonalds, the great beauty of the West, had gone away from the Macdonalds into foreign parts after a young man of their clan, who had been reported as killed by another young man who had taken service with the Duke of Burgundy, and who had come home to see his mother, and had afterwards gone away to take service—lucrative—under the Llama of Thibet. This young man, according to the legends of his clan, was assassinated at Kashgar, by the Tartars, in consequence of being recognised as an hereditary



Tartar, fighting against his own family, in consequence of Alick na Dhuin having married one of the innumerable daughters of Kublai Khan. The "Scot abroad" is very difficult to deal with, for he marries everybody. The young man who was afterwards killed at Kashgar, in fact told the whole story about Van Dysart and his wife to the Macdonalds, and the Macdonalds, then at one with the Macgregors in their opposition to the Campbells, told it to the Macgregors.

The whole story was known, and judged by these simple Highlanders: they judged that if they had sinned, they had repented, and they took them to their honest hearts, and loved them in their wild rude fashion most deeply.

And, indeed, they were very lovable, for they neither of them ceased in good works: they lived in that little castle half-way up Glenlyon, below Innerleithan, and as they had no children they lived very comfortably. She was always about among the poor folks of the Macgregors, and when the wounded were brought in he had as swift a foot on the hill-side as any one in the way of assistance.

He spoke once and for all; he was known as a fighting man, and the Macgregors asked him to lead them against the Campbells. He answered "No; I have ruined my life by killing one man, and I will not kill another, save to defend my house." So Van Dysart lived on with his wife, doing good with his wealth; and neither of them were unhappy. She had the poor, the sick, and the wounded to look after, and he, when he had done working with her, had the moor and the loch. He was completely subdued, and all the best part of his nature came out. Sometimes he would bring home the biggest deer or the largest salmon, and hoped that she would be home to see them; but she would often be away among the sick and wounded of the Macgregors, and he would go after her and wait at the door, and when she came out he would say, "Love, I have nothing left save you."

But the Campbells pressed very hard, there seemed little doubt that Glenlyon must go. The grey heads of the Glen came to Van Dysart and consulted him as a foreign man who knew war. Van Dysart told them that their case was absolutely and entirely hopeless, and that their time was come. The only plan, he said, was to send his wife to Sanctuary at Dunkeld, and in case of his house being threatened, to fight at their head against the Campbells. As a foreigner he saw he had no right to fight unless his house was threatened; in such a case he deemed it the right of a Christian gentleman to fight in defence of his own property.

That night he sent away his wife, with all their papers and

money, to Dunkeld. She had not been gone eight hours when a swift young man came in from Perth with a parcel, and Van Dysart paid the young man, and fed him, and saw him go naked into his bed-place (they slept so then) before he would open it. For it had come from Ghent, and a terror was on him.

He unrolled it by himself; first of all he unrolled two oil paintings on canvas, and he saw in the first a portrait of himself, and in the second a portrait of his wife; in the centre of these was a letter, more precious than the portraits.

"We hated you once, but we love you now. All the wrong you ever did to us is entirely forgiven. We have the portraits of yourself and your wife by us, and we thought that you would like replicas of them.

"MARGARET VAN EYCK,

"HUBERT VAN EYCK."

But not John Van Eyck: he never signed that letter. Van Dysart the next morning started off the young man to Dunkeld with the pictures and the letter. Shortly after which the Macgregor came in.

"My friend," said Van Dysart, "I am ready to fight for you if you think me worth it, and if you think it is worth while fighting. Is my house in danger?"

"You will be burnt out by the Campbells next week, if you last as long. What has made you change your mind?"

"I have been forgiven," said Van Dysart. "Your wrongs are iniquitous, and if you will ask me to fight I will fight. I have but one solitary enemy now left in the world."

"Will you give me his name?" said Macgregor, "for we have skene dhus in this country."

"His name is John Van Eyck," said Van Dysart; "but as you are never likely to meet him, you can keep your skene dhu in your stocking."

There was a great feast in Campbell's Tower a few nights after this conversation. *Everybody* was there; it got known among the ladies and gentlemen above the salt and near the head of the table that a Macgregor had got in, and that he was safe by the laws of hospitality. How that young man had got in was a very interesting subject of conversation at the upper end of the table, and how on earth that young man was ever to get out again was a subject too large for human contemplation. And again, which was the young Macgregor? no one seemed to know. There *was* a Macgregor, but no one knew which young man he was.

Prince Ulrich of Saxony found out (he married Dorothy, fourteenth daughter of a progenitive Campbell whose name we have forgotten and so had to propose Argyll's health). Ulrich of Saxony proposed the health of the house of Campbell, and after the last words of his short speech, declared in very bad German-English, there was not the least doubt that there was a Macgregor in the room. A young man bounded on to the table, among the silver plate, and looking at Argyll, said—

"Campbell! dog! I am here to denounce you. You are a liar and a thief. You desire our blood. You are a traitor and a scoundrel."

Campbell moved in his chair for a moment to look at the young Macgregor.

"There is a young gentleman down there who has had too much to drink," he said, quietly. "He had better be taken off the table, Seneschal. You can go, sir, and carry the ruin of your clan with you."

The young man went out thinking he must fight for his life, but to his utter astonishment, he was treated like a very prince by the Campbell young men. The Argylls of those times had resolved on the ruin of his *clan*, and could well afford to spare *him*. As for the Campbell young men they let him go, and so it is not in any way wonderful that he should have arrived at Van Dysart's Castle, in Glenlyon, after coming over three mountains, neither naked nor wounded. It is not also by any means improbable that Van Dysart should have cursed the Highland Scotch heartily for fighting about nothing whatever. Probable or improbable, he did that thing, and after the young man was gone to bed Van Dysart stepped round to old Macgregor, and asked when he thought the Campbells would move.

"When we least think it," said old Macgregor.

"Will they move to-night?" said Van Dysart.

"Next year, or the year after," said Macgregor, laughing.

"We shall be prepared now, for this will get about among our young men, and we shall be prepared. Campbells do not fight for nothing, and they will wait until we are unprepared."

He was right. Two months elapsed and Van Dysart was not unhappy; he might have fled a hundred times over, but the wild life suited him, and his wife was at Dunkeld, so that he could go often to see her, and he knew she was out of danger.

This pleasant, cultivated church life suited him at times when he was tired of his Highlanders; and his wife was contented among the religious women. One day, when he had brought down a deer and a salmon to his wife, she told him a most un-

expected fact. She was going to be a mother. He felt a new life in him as he took back the news to the kindly Macgregors, and there were immense and savage rejoicings in Glenlyon. The child yet unborn was at once adopted by the clan, and a grand feast was set going in honour of the little Flanderkin Scot, and a bonfire was lighted on Schiehallion, to which all the able-bodied of the clan went, as though there were no Campbells waiting for them.

Van Dysart did not go ; he sat in his little castle reading, and thinking at intervals of the future of his little child, so far away from all who could help it. He rose and wrote a letter to Margaret Van Eyck :—

“DEAR MARGARET,—

“My wife is going to give me a child. Take care of it and of her. There is danger here among these savages, but I have got to love them with a love deeper than that with which I ever loved my own people, and I cannot desert them. These people have trusted me, and I cannot desert them. Will you tell John that I have forgiven him. Good-bye.

“VAN DYSART.”

He sat for an hour or two, mostly thinking how utterly foolish these Macgregors were to be gaping at a bonfire with the enemy at their gate, when his door was quietly opened and quietly shut. A ghost stood before him—Spada !—and he leaped on his feet.

“Van Dysart,” said Spada, “there is no time to talk. I have taken service with the Campbells for the last three weeks, and I have just found out that you were here. I have dived myself out of every city in Europe, and took service with them, and they pay well. But when I heard that *you* were the Flanderkin whom the Macgregors had among them, I gave up everything, pay and character, to warn you. I have deserted for your sake : your people must fight in the morning, and you and I must get safe to Dunkeld. Where is your wife, and where are your people ? ”

“The people are mainly on the hill at a bonfire,” said Van Dysart, shaking hands warmly with Spada. “My wife is in sanctuary at Dunkeld.”

“That is brave ! ” said Spada. “Now we must save ourselves.”

“Spada, do you know that I won’t save myself.”

“It is perfectly easy,” said Spada.

“But I cannot do it. I cannot leave these people in their ruin. I thank you deeply for your friendship, but I cannot be a coward now, though I have been a coward in the old times.”

Spada! these people have been kind to me, and trust to me to lead them. Spada! as a soldier and a gentleman, I ask you what you would do if you were in my place. I am a new man now, and I ask you before God what ought I to do?"

Spada fidgeted and fumed, and kicked the sticks on the hearth together. At last he said—

"Devil take it! Of course you must stay. I shall stay with you, however."

"But, my dear Spada, you are a deserter, and will be hung."

"Well, I have risked that for twenty years, and I don't mind risking it again," said this strange compound of chivalrous gentleman and utter rogue.

"When will they be on us?" said Van Dysart.

Spada stared at him with an amazed countenance.

"When will they be on us?" repeated Van Dysart.

"Do you think I would tell you *that*?" said Spada. "I know very well, but I would die sooner than give any details."

"You said we must fight in the morning?"

"I said more than I meant, then. But here you may have to fight any hour, and the sooner your people come home the better. God! what is that light on the wall?—the dogs have followed me!"

It was too awfully true. Spada had been watched and followed; and before they had time to look round them three hamlets on the right side of Glenlyon were blazing, and the women and the weans were struggling through the river towards Schiehallion. Campbell's scouts had brought in the news that the Macgregors were feasting that night because the Macdonald woman was going to have a baby, and when they looked round for Spada to lead them the Campbells found that the treacherous Italian had deserted them. Those of the clan who were ready marched at once, with young Colin Campbell at their head, and going swiftly, almost overtook Spada, while the Macgregors were dispersed without arms on the shoulder of Schiehallion.

"Where the —— are your men?" said Spada.

"I can get about fifty here in ten minutes," said Van Dysart.

"We can hold the castle with them for an hour until the others come from the hill. Shall we retreat to the hill?"

"And leave the women and children?" said Spada. "No; that would not do. Send the women and children to the hill to hurry your men down. It is almost hopeless, but we may beat the dogs yet."

Van Dysart could now talk Gaelic, and he pushed the women and children on to the hill to Schiehallion to bring their fathers

and brothers up, while the shine of the torches of the Campbells was dancing in the river within two hundred yards of them, for the Campbells were looking for a ford in the river, which they had never crossed before. Spada and Van Dysart heard a dull confused splashing as they came through.

"How many have you behind you?" said Spada, for it had all taken place in the dark.

"I think fully fifty," said Van Dysart.

"Can you get them to hold their tongues, and not give the slogan? if so there is life and hope."

Van Dysart passed the word for dead silence, in Gaelic, and it was observed. As the first Campbells emerged from the water the Macgregors were at them, and Spada said afterwards, at Padua, that he never saw any fighting like that; and indeed the Highlander fights better than any other man. There was moon enough for the men to see one another, a fact at which Spada rather rejoiced, because young Colin, who led the Campbells, had been impertinent to him, and he intended the young man to die. Spada's exquisite fence was soon a match for Colin's clumsy sword and shield work, and Colin's body went floating down the Lyon, face uppermost, looking at the stars. But Van Dysart had on unapproved Highland armour, like David, of which he was not master, and Duncan Dhu, a Dunniewassel, got through all his fine fencing, and cut him through the neck, so that his body floated down nearly beside Colin's body, and they were found both on the next day in the nearest shallow, side by side.

So ended Van Dysart, a man who was worthy of better things. The Macgregors were destroyed practically that night. Such things will happen in war; but search how they would the Campbells never caught Spada. They threatened the Bishop of Dunkeld with violation of sanctuary for entertaining him, but the bishop appeared at the door of the cathedral, *plenis pontificalibus*, and requested them to search the premises. When they had done so he informed them that Spada—a faithful son of the Church—had sailed to Flanders from Perth, three days before. The Campbells threatened to burn down his cathedral, whereupon he gave them his benediction, and committed them to God's holy keeping: in short he blessed them over the bridge of Dunkeld, he, uttering the most beautiful sentiments, and they swearing like troopers. We believe that Boileau was the first man to point out the awful effects of priestly forgiveness on the very bravest warriors. It had no effect on the Campbells, however, and they went home sulky, thinking about which was to be the next clan they should ruin, and thinking also that they would do their own

business next time, without employing a rascally Italian like Spada.

As for the end of Spada, we can perfectly easily tell that. Spada had an old aunt at Padua of considerable wealth ; Spada had borrowed money of her as long as she would lend him any, after which the old lady refused to see him at all, and kicked him out into the world, hearing of his astounding rascalities through her Father Confessor, who, we may be sure, did not make the least of them, wanting her money for Holy Church. This old lady had Spada tracked everywhere (at a considerable expense), and grew more and more infuriated every day at Spada's villainies. Her director told his bishop that the money was safe for the Church, and his bishop and he settled how they were to spend it. The old lady died, and her will was read out by the notary before the Bishop of Padua and Spada's relations. It was a very singular will :—

“ To the Bishop of Padua (I use English figures) £500 for two west windows in the cathedral. To my director, Father Francesco, £500, which he, being vowed to poverty, must give to his Order. To my maid Dorothea £2000, on condition that she does not go to confession more than twice a year. All the rest of my property in Padua and elsewhere I leave to my nephew, Michael Angelo Spada, who is worth all the priests that ever were born ! ”

Although the old lady had died in mortal sin, and was doubtless finding it out by the time that the will was read, yet our old friend Spada found himself, for the first time in his life, a very rich man. He was sick of fighting, but the old gambling instinct was still in him, and he took to banking. He entered the firm of Ahasuerus, Jehosaphat, and Jones, as senior partner, and the firm became Spada and Ahasuerus. Jehosaphat and Jones sold out; but Ahasuerus knew Spada better than Jehosaphat and Jones did, and wisely stood in. Said Ahasuerus—“ You must be half a Jew, Spada, for you have had fine clothes on your back these ten years by gambling. You must have a good head. Bring in your fifty thousand pounds, my boy, and we will found two great families, but no gambling, my lad, without previous consultation.” There was no gambling without previous consultation ; but they founded two great families, one Italian, one English. The Jew was forced to confess that in great and risky speculations the Italian dicer was his master. I suppose that no man is a better master of finance than your betting-man of the present day ; at all events, Spada and Ahasuerus made their fortunes ten times over, and their descendants rule the money-market to a certain extent still.

Spada wanted to marry Ahasuerus's daughter Rebecca. This young lady did not see her way to it at first, being attached to young Aminadab Solomon ; but she pointed out to Aminadab that he had much better marry her sister Esther and come into the firm, and the young man took her advice ; in fine, Spada married Rebecca, and died a respectable and fat banker at the age of eighty-five. The progeny of this marriage are now connected with nearly every royal family in Europe.

The Bishop of Dunkeld found himself with a young widow on his hands, with whom he could do anything. Madame Van Dysart was a fine lady now ; her husband's great wealth had come to her unconditionally. The Bishop thought what he had best do, and he concluded that he had best behave as a gentleman. When he brought the news of her husband's death to her, she was quite calm.

"I knew that it must be so," she said ; "but why he ?—not me ? Your God is a cruel and vindictive God ; I will not worship him."

"My dear," said the Bishop of Dunkeld, "you are talking very foolish words."

"And you also," she said ; "I will have no more of you."

The Bishop of Dunkeld redoubled his kindness to her, but she grew more rebellious to him day by day, until a lay-sister came in one morning and told him that there was a noble boy in the house.

He went to her bedside at once, and saw a little pink cheek upon her breast : he had lain in such a place years ago, before he was a man, and before he was a priest ; now he was a priest, but he was still a man, he bent over her and said—

"Are you better, sister ?"

She said, "I am much better, I shall be better still soon. You forgive my wicked words ?"

"Who am I to forgive ?" said the Bishop, in a whisper. "I have cursed God in my heart, like Job, and have not died. See, sister. When you get well you must go away from us. You must go to Ghent. You must go to the Van Eycks. You are not fit for a religious life : it would not suit you. Geniuses, fools, and madmen can stand it. You are neither of the three."

"I will bring up my son as a Churchman, at all events," said the poor widow mother.

"You had better not——" but we will not follow the Bishop of Dunkeld in the history of a ruined life : there, that evening, he told the poor woman everything, and she told him everything. Every one was waiting for the result, but the Bishop had not said

and the choristers and singing men sat opposite one another listening to the roar of the Bran, just outside. The Bishop hurried himself into his cope, and the old sacristan said—

“You are late, my Lord.”

The Bishop said, “I have been hearing the confession of that Flemish woman, Van Dysart.”

My Lord Bishop of Dunkeld, had she not been hearing yours? And which of you had given the other absolution?

“God has been cruel to me, for I had got to love him so,” she now said.

“You have your child, and a life of usefulness before you.”

That is almost the last which passed between the Bishop of Dunkeld and Madame Van Dysart. I wonder what the Pope would have said; in fact, I wonder what the priests would have said. But the Scotch folks knew the truth about the Bishop, though it was kept from the priests: the old wives knew the story, though they hardly dared whisper it one to the other. There had been a black, dark night in Athole, twenty years before, and in the *mêlée* one brother had killed the other. It was not the Bishop who was killed. The Bishop was the survivor, and went into holy orders, giving his estates in perpetuity to the Church. Madame Van Dysart had met a man with a sorrow greater than her own, for he had told her all.

It was strange to see her there with her baby, so patient, so quiet, so *happy*, and then to see her suddenly remember her husband, and burst into frantic hysterical tears.

“It is a lie,” she said to the Bishop once, “to say that he was a bad husband to me. He was the best of husbands: there was no one ever like him, and I think I will go to Margaret and talk about him. She would have had him, I believe, even after he killed Leon. Did you know Leon?”

“My dear young lady, you are out of your mind,” said the Bishop. “Who was Leon?”

“Leon! you must be foolish not to know Leon. Leon was as pretty as my love who is gone. My love killed him in a duel, my love could kill any one. I wish he had killed John Van Eyck; he *can* paint, but that is all that he is fit for. I think that I am a little wild to-night, Bishop. I will be better soon, and go away to Margaret. I want to say something. I want to leave some money to the Church before I go. I am very rich. How much should I give you?”

“Write from Ghent,” said the honest Bishop. “You are not fit to govern your affairs now. Ask this Margaret Van Eyck what you should give us; let her assess your woe. Something,

daughter," he continued, smiling. "And at this moment you would give us all, without thinking of yourself?"

And Madame Van Dysart said, "That is true; I must think of him, and I will go to Margaret Van Eyck."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE great picture of the "Adoration of the Lamb," was getting on splendidly. The centre was as nearly as possible finished; though John Van Eyck was touching up his own work, and was wanting to touch up his brother Hubert's. I think that Hubert would have allowed him to do so, but Margaret showed temper when he proposed it, and said that she would destroy the picture if John attempted to lay his hands on either Hubert's work or her own. Hubert took her to task quietly and gently about her exhibition of temper.

"My dearest Hubert," she said, "there was a time when I believed in John, but that time is past. He has no heart, and a painter without sentiment is a fool."

"You have too much sentiment, Mag," said Hubert.

"I know that; but who has painted best in this great picture?"

"Well, you have, sister; but then you have chosen to paint only the people you loved."

"Yet not every one I loved," said Margaret. "You let John paint you, and he has put you beside himself in the rear rank, among the Saints."

"Where would you have put me?" said Hubert, kissing her.

"In the left voile," she said, "with Van Kenning, Van Dysart, and Spada. That was very good my putting Van Dysart on horseback, and Van Kenning on foot."

"Why?"

"Because Van Dysart, radical as he is, will never walk when he can ride," she said, laughing.

"You have left out Leon," whispered her brother.

"Would you paint me when I am dead?" she asked.

"No."

"No! Come and look at the right voile, and see how I have been working."

Hubert came down to her end of the great hall; and she drew the veil from her picture. Hubert Van Eyck then cast his cap

and plume on the floor with an oath ; for on the extreme right of that voile Margaret has painted herself and Sister Priscilla advancing with the light of heaven on their faces.

"No one ever painted like that," he said ; and, indeed, we agree with him, though a vast number of people will disagree with me. We get little true work now ; and that picture has ten years' study in it ; it took more than ten years to paint it. In our opinion, our own best artist is a scene painter when we compare him with the Van Eycks ; and he would be the first person to say so himself. A picture cannot be painted in ten months ; it takes more than ten months to study a picture like the "Adoration."

Hubert looked at the right voile once more, and he said—

"Where is Father Peter ?"

"I have left him to John," she answered.

"Where is the Macdonald woman—the woman who married Van Dysart, killed among the Scythians."

"I must leave her to you, Hubert," said Margaret. "I cannot paint her. She has been in the house this three days, but I cannot paint her."

"In the house ?" cried Hubert.

"She will never do in the picture as Magdalene," said Margaret, "for she has a baby at her bosom—such a sweet little love, Hubert ! Hubert, dear, be godfather to it ; she and I lay together last night with the little one between us. What do you ask of me ? Can I paint Magdalene with a baby at her breast ?"

"She was never Magdalene—she was never that," said Hubert, angrily. "As for her political sins, may God forgive them, for she went near to ruin us—but she was never that. Is she in the house ?"

"I am here as usual, listening to your conversation. I have been a desperate woman, but not a bad one. I have heard and seen things which would make your flesh creep, but that is all. Van Dysart is my only husband. You must put me in the picture, and we will look at it in heaven together."

"But——" said Hubert Van Eyck.

"But," she said—"precise your accusations against me, and and see what they come to. They come to nothing. I have led a wild mad life, but I request that any man in the town will say one word against me."

"My dear soul," said Hubert, "this is too audacious !"

"But it is true," said she.

"Do you mean to say—— ?" said Hubert.

"Yes, I do," she said ; "and I mean to say that I do not intend to continue the discussion before your sister. I am rich

and respectable, and in the way you mean I am perfectly innocent. Put me in the picture, Hubert ; I swear that I am worthy of it ! ”

“ Shall I paint you, or shall Margaret ? ” said Hubert.

“ You had better,” she said.

And so the Macdonald woman is in the picture after all, and you had better find her out. I think that you will find a little grey dog near to her ; but, after three days’ contemplation of the great picture, you will be as good a judge as I.

HETTY.

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HETTY.

CHAPTER I.

REBECCA'S REASONS FOR MARRYING ANYBODY WHO WOULD TAKE HER.

IN one of the narrowest and dullest lanes in the neighbourhood of Walham Green lived George Turner, Esq., Solicitor, of Gray's Inn. His house was the largest in the lane, had certainly pretensions to be, or to have been, a "gentleman's" house, for there was a coach-house and stable beside it; and the garden before and behind was full three-quarters of an acre.

The other houses in the lane were eight-roomed, semi-detached, brown brick boxes of houses; with long gardens in front, and little back-yards, with a water-butt and a clothes-line, behind. They were miserable little places; yet Rebecca Turner, the youngest daughter, while lolling and yawning, would envy their inhabitants the possession of the key many times a day.

For there was life among them. Those among them who were thrifty, or well to do, or childless, or whose children were good, had pretty plots of flowers even; but this was rare, for there were too many children; and so, on a washing-day, the clothes-lines and poles were always up in the front garden, stamped hard and black by a hundred little feet. Nay, there was another reason against flowers. The landlord of that lane did not see his way to new palings; and so, if you wanted flowers, you must keep the palings in repair yourself. Yet there was life enough there. The neighbours—the women—dawdled into one another's houses, and gossiped; nay, now and then, but very seldom, quarrelled. Once there was a fire, and Miss Turner, the precise elder daughter, seeing them running, hoped it was not *their* house. "No such

luck," said Miss Rebecca, with such singular emphasis that her elder sister let her be.

Turner's house, or The Cedars, stood back from the road, in a blotch of mangy grass, and a blotch of mangy soot-stained gravel, and accounted for its apparent usurped title by one miserable stump and one miserable bough of the tree of Lebanon, which solitary bough pointed meekly and sorrowfully to where its brother had once stood. Behind the house was a bit of kitchen-garden, and a bit of grass unmown for years; which would have been something had it been secluded, but even that was denied you. It ended in a wide, wild waste of market-garden, stretching away acre after acre. The timber on the estate consisted of a broken down mulberry tree, and a large quantity of sooty lilac.

The house, though in habitable repair, was in that half state of dilapidation which is sometimes a good deal more melancholy than a really good downright ruin. The ruin says to you, "Here, come here, I belong to you as much as to any one now; come, and I will tell you stories;" and tells them to you accordingly; whereas the half-dilapidated house says only, "We have secrets here yet." Turner's house was dark red brick, with a high tile roof, perpendicular to the top of the garret windows, and then sloping like another—the most hideous of roofs; its door was approached by high steps, and the windows of the living-rooms were long and narrow, with thick wooden frames, and bulgy glass panes; some had a nob in the middle, which made looking out of window a luxury difficult to indulge in: internally, the furniture was principally of horsehair and dark mahogany. And Miss Rebecca wished it was burned down.

In this house she lived. Mr. Turner was, in religion, of the strictest form of Calvinism and Sabbatarianism, forbidding any books except theological ones on a Sunday, and never allowing a novel or a book of poetry into the house. There had been a time once when she had been able to escape all this: before she had grown up; but that was all over. She had, unlike her sister, grown up good-looking. The widower, her father, had consulted religious women of the congregation; they had been unanimous; the girl Rebecca was much too pretty to go out by herself. From that time she was a prisoner, for her father was no man to be trifled with. Can one wonder that a high-spirited girl, capable of any kind of pleasure, should one very wet Sunday evening, after chapel and a sermon of an hour, as she was going to bed, emphatically wish she was dead, wish she had never been born, and most particularly wish she had been ugly.

"If I had been as ugly as you I could have gone anywhere I

chose, and done as I liked. It was old Mother Russel and Miss Soper that put *him* up to my being pretty. I wish *they* were dead with all my heart."

"My dear sister Rebecca! After chapel, too!" said her sister Carry, solemnly.

She didn't say she wished *that* was dead; she only clenched her hands and gasped for breath. That was the last of it all—all the dull misery of her life came before her stronger than ever at the mention of chapel, and she cast herself sobbing on the bed.

"I wish somebody would come and marry me," she said; "but there's no chance—no young men ever come near us. I'd marry Akin, I'd marry anybody—except that beast," she added, suddenly, with a shrill determination which pointed to a small chance in favour of the beast's prospects, and then by degrees she sobbed herself quiet.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. RUSSEL TELLS MISS SOPER SO MUCH AS SHE KNOWS OF THE FAMILY HISTORY.

THE lady so disrespectfully mentioned by Rebecca as old Mother Russel, was taking tea with Miss Soper. Mrs. Russel had been, some said, born at Walham Green; but was certainly, with few exceptions, the oldest inhabitant there; Miss Soper, on the other hand, was a comparatively new-comer. These, it will be remembered, were the two ladies who had given poor Rebecca such very dire offence by persuading her father that she was too pretty to walk out by herself; and, having just talked through some of their other neighbours in whom we are not interested, and having come to the Turners, in whom we are, we will just make bold to listen a little to them.

Mrs. Russel was a fat, heavy woman, whose fat, unlike that of some people, had become physically distressing to her, and had made her cross. She had discovered the solace of spirits, but used them moderately. It is possible that she may have been a good-natured woman once, but the continual distress of her earthly load had made her ill-natured. Religion with her meant a slight excitement and society, but little more.

Miss Soper was a very different woman—pale, gaunt, black, rigid, with a face like a Roman-nosed horse. She had been for some years teacher in a small suburban ladies' school, until she

came into a little money, when she retired, with no heart and a small annuity, to Walham Green. It was in her capacity as ex-schoolmistress that she voted on Rebecca's not going out alone. She was consulted as an expert, and left no doubt on the minds of Mrs. Russel and Mr. Turner as to her opinion on *that* score. In her religion she was most deeply sincere, in her duties most rigid; she saw no harm in talking over her neighbours' affairs, and she had a voice like an aged pieman to do it with.

"That's a bright, clever-looking girl, that Rebecca Turner," she said. "Quick to learn."

"A deal too quick," said Mrs. Russel.

"She seems quicker than her sister."

"Caroline is a real good pious girl, and takes after her father."

"Rebecca does not, then?" said Miss Soper.

"No, Rebecca is another sort of girl. She looks so like her mother sometimes that I shake like a mould of jelly" (which was an apt illustration). "She takes after her mother; and Turner is a man who washes his dirty linen at home, but I misdoubt he has trouble with her now. If he hasn't, he will."

"Did he have trouble with her mother, then?"

"Do you mean to say you have never heard?" said Mrs. Russel, in solemn *staccato*.

"How could I? I had not come to the Green. Do tell," said Miss Soper, eagerly.

Mrs. Russel took her cup in her hand, and having stirred her tea, used the spoon for rhetorical purposes, and solemnly and immediately began.

"There's never been murder *done* in that house, my dear, for there's many a slip between cup and lip, but it's been *hollered* often enough. Awful nights have been in that house, my dear, between Turner and his wife," she continued, drawing closer, and speaking low; "she yelling at the top of her voice at him, calling him every bad name she could lay her tongue to; he praying at the top of his voice, to pray the evil spirit out of her, until he'd lose his temper and fist hold of her, and you'd hear her trying to bite him; and the little children a-screaming, and the maid run away for fear, and all the lane out to listen! Ah, quiet as Turner looks now, he has had something to go through in his time. You may well ask if he had trouble with his wife."

"Was she mad?"

"He never dared say it of her at all events," said Mrs. Russel. "I'll tell you all I know. She was a lady. Says you, so are we. I mean a real lady. Says you again, so are we. But I mean a real tip-top carriage lady, you know."

So did Miss Soper, who nodded. "And how did she come to marry him, then?"

"Well, Turner is a good figure of a man; though it was not that. He had got the management of her affairs when she was left a widow, and he managed them well enough to excite her gratitude; and she had been ill-used, and her friends had dropped away, and I fancy she thought she might do worse, and so she had him; and a bad job it was. But if a good sound Protestant marries a Papist and a worldling with his eyes open, he must take the consequences."

"A Papist!" almost screeched Miss Soper. "Mr. Turner marry a Papist!"

"Well, she had a fine penny of money, mind you, and she was a thorough worldling, and careless of religion, and Turner thought he could convert her. We used to have her name down for conversion in the general prayer ever so long, until she found it out, and had words with him. But it all came to nothing; she laughed him to scorn when he spoke to her about it; all of which he has told us at experience-meetings; and she found *that* out, and got furious, and things went on from bad to worse, until Caroline being born put things square for a time. But after that Rebecca was born, Mrs. Turner fell ill, and asked for a priest to come to her, she having, of course, gone to mass on her own accord; and he made answer that no priest should cross his doors, not if she was on her death-bed. That was the worst scene she made him, for she started up in a shawl and petticoat to run all the way to Cadogan Terrace, by Sloane Street, and had to be fetched back by force. Well, then nothing went right any way, and she seemed to lose head. She accused him of taking her money, and insisted that one of the children should be brought up a Papist, and used to smuggle off Rebecca continually to mass and confession, and such things, and some say got the child baptized into the Romish faith."

"It is extremely probable," said Miss Soper; "and how did it end?"

"It was after a worse row than usual," said Mrs. Russel, lowering her voice again. "It was the worst and the last, and there had been violence—it all came out at the inquest—and she went out somewhere, some said to the public-house, but I never saw nothing of that, and others will confirm me; and when she came back he had gone away with little Rebecca, leaving word that she would never see the child no more, for that he had taken it away to save its soul."

"He was a fool to do that," said Miss Soper.

Mrs. Russel eyed her curiously. "You're a sensible woman,

ma'am," she said ; " though I doubt if we are right religiously, seeing that he saved it from popery. But," added the vulgar old gossip, flushing up scarlet, " if my man had come between me and my children in the old times, I'd have——But as I was saying, when she hears that, she outs into the lane and carries on to that extent that Mrs. Akin (the washerwoman, you know, my dear soul, Jim Akin's, the costermonger's, mother, whose mother had been with the barrer for years herself) says she never heard anything like it. There was nothing low in it—no vulgar language or swearing—but just downright awful cursing, like that in the Bible ; and it frightened all that heard it. Then she went into the house and upstairs ; and the maid had run away. And when he came home, the neighbours told him what they'd seen, and how the child (that's Caroline now) had been a-crying all the afternoon. And when they burst in there she was a-lying stone dead at the bottom of the stairs."

" What did the inquest say ? "

" Nothing. Whether she fell down, or chucked herself down, there was nothing to show. The child only said that it had found its mamma asleep on her face, and that it wanted its tea, and couldn't make her wake. Well, ma'am, and that's the history of that little mystery."

" I'll go and see 'em," said Miss Soper, emphatically. " What time do they have their tea ? "

CHAPTER III.

REBECCA'S LOVER, AND WHAT SHE THOUGHT OF HIM.

MR. TURNER, a man of about sixty, must have been at one time handsome, but now, although his features were good, his complexion was gone ; and the continual habit, persisted in for so many years, of self-contemplation, had left an expression, which was not very pleasant, on his face ; a look which an ill-natured person might say, was something between a scowl and a sneer, as though he was continually saying, " I am George Turner, that is who I am, and who the deuce are you ? " His conversation was, like that of many other men of the same standing, entirely about himself ; arguing, one would fancy, from a certain feeling of being wanting in the more ornamental business of life, and from a

determination that the hearer should know what an exceeding fine fellow he was.

Partly from religion, and partly from temper, he had been very careful to banish everything graceful from his house, so that there should not be a snare in it. So he had sternly refused poor Rebecca's, who craved for such things, petitions for cocks and hens, for rabbits, nay, even for one poor little tiny bird. However, in an old house, where there are rats and mice, you must have a cat; and you'll not hinder a cat having kittens. And so it came about that Rebecca had two kittens to play with; and her father, letting himself into the house at half-past four on a winter's afternoon, found Rebecca, perfectly happy, lying in the dark before the fire, playing with her two kittens, one of which had a blue ribbon round its neck, and the other a red.

"Get up," he said, "and don't lie there like a hoyden. Get up, and make yourself tidy. There are people coming to tea."

Rebecca never answered: that would only make her father colourably and openly angry, and she would have had the worst of it. But by long practice in this happy household she had got the trick of annoying him, and yet of keeping within the law.

"Pretty little darlings," she said with effusion, as she rose with a cat on each arm. "I wonder if you have immortal souls, dears; if so, they don't seem to be much trouble to you."

"Don't talk such nonsense as that. People would say that you were mad, if they heard you. For a grown girl to be kissing cats, too, and a marriageable girl! Bah!"

"Who's coming to tea, pa?"

"Mrs. Russel and Miss Soper."

"Daniel Lambert and the Old Dragoon. Pa, I wonder if Miss Soper was regularly discharged from the army, or whether she deserted. If I was she I should shave off that moustache, and let my whiskers grow. Who else is coming?"

"Mr. Morley," said Turner, without any open manifestation of anger, for certain reasons; "and also, I believe, Mr. Hagbut."

"Oh, pa!"

"I am at a loss to conceive why you should make an exclamation at Mr. Hagbut's name," said Turner.

"Are you?" said Rebecca. "I am not. If you were as young and as pretty as I am, how would you like such a—minister of the gospel, sitting down beside you the whole evening, quoting texts of Scripture to you which bore on the subject of love and marriage? If he wants to marry me, why don't he say so like a man—and get his answer?"

"I should feel highly flattered by Mr. Hagbut's attentions," said Mr. Turner; "and, moreover, I should reflect that his suit was backed by your father. Only, mind one thing, Rebecca,—you refuse that good man at your peril. I insist on the match, mind that. You *dare* refuse him, that is all."

Not one word did Rebecca say to this, but left her father secretly fuming with anger. She went upstairs to her room, and began her toilet very slowly and very thoughtfully, and as she thought the face grew darker and darker, until the muscles in it began to quiver, and there grew upon it a look of deep horror and deep loathing, terrible to see. She arose stealthily, and went with her candle to a box in the corner of the room, and, secretly taking out a book, began reading with shaking hands; the book came open easily at the place she wanted, and she was deep in the passage when she was utterly scared by her sister's voice in the room, crying petulantly, "Why, Rebecca, you'll never be ready in time. Mr. Hagbut's come already."

"I'll be ready directly, dear Carry; don't tell on me. It is only one of Sir Walter Scott's novels, and it is so interesting at the end."

"So it seems," said matter-of-fact Carry. "Why you are as pale as a ghost, and all of a tremble! Now I can see why the ministers forbid us to read such godless rant."

One of Sir Walter Scott's novels, she said. Could it have been the "*Bride of Lammermoor*"? Heaven forbid!

Although she was going into company which she disliked, and although there was at least one man there whom she hated, and whom she wished to hate her, yet in the irresistible instinct of beauty she dressed herself prettily, and coming calmly and proudly into the room with a bow, sat down by her sister.

Mrs. Russel and Miss Soper were there, and two ministers, one of whom she had never seen before, but one of whom was only known too well.

He was a very large, stout man, with a head the colour and shape of an addled egg, with the small end uppermost. He had a furze of grey hair, and whiskers shaved close in the middle of his cheeks; he had large pale blue, almost opaque, eyes, very large ears, and a continual smile on a mouth made for talking. Probably black dress clothes and a white tie are as becoming a dress as exists—on certain people: on him they were hideous; his collarless cravat was a wisp, the lapels of his coat were like elephant's ears, and the coat itself was perfectly straight down the back, so as to set off his great stomach better in profile. His cuffs nearly concealed his great fat hands, and his short, ill-made

trousers scarce met his clumsy shoes. The whole man was a protest against beauty, or grace of life in any way ; to Rebecca he was loathsome, hideous beyond measure ; and she was to marry him—unless she herself, alone and unaided, could fight a battle against all her little world. Poor thing ! it was hard for her ; it was, indeed. Forgive her desperation.

This horrible great moon-calf rose from his chair when she entered, and with a leering conscious smile on his face stood there, following her with his pale eyes, until she sat down. Mrs. Russel looked “arch,”—a horrible thing for anybody to do off the stage of a third-rate theatre, still more horrible in the case of a fat old woman. Miss Soper, *au fait* at things of this kind, moved from her seat, and gave it up to the Rev. Mr. Hagbut, so that he now sat next poor shuddering Rebecca.

“Will you ask a blessing, Mr. Hagbut ?”

Smooth came the easy words from that mouth, in the well-practised, whining falsetto ; dexterously quoted were the well-known texts of Scripture, so dexterously that he brought in the Marriage in Cana, and made through that an allusion to earthly marriages. “He has not asked me yet,” she thought ; “and if I am firm they can’t kill me.”

His style of talking was what one may be allowed to call spondaic ; that is, he lengthened every syllable, and even when he came across one which was unavoidably short he lengthened it as much as possible. Then again he put the emphasis of his sentence just where no one else would have put it ; and his discourse on the whole was one of the most painfully laboured masses of artificiality and affectation ever seen. That the man may have been a good man I do not deny, I have only to do with his effect on Rebecca.

He gave himself, if not the airs of an accepted lover, at least of a man who was sure of his game.

“You heard my discourse the last Sabbath evening, Miss Turner ?” he said, bringing his head as near hers as he could.

“I heard it,” said Rebecca ; “but I did not attend to it.”

“The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak,” said he, smiling.

“I don’t think the spirit was willing,” she answered. “I hate sermons.”

This was very confusing, but under these circumstances one must say something.

“The prayer, or the hymn, pleases you better, doubtless ?”

“I hate the prayer worse than the sermon, but I like some of

the hymns—nay, most of them. I should like the service to be all music, light, and ornament, as it was at the Catholic church where I used to go with my poor mother.”

“Vanity, my dear daughter, vanity.”

“I don’t see any particular vanity about it. Why, when you are praying extempore before a large congregation, and take pains, you are thinking all the time how it will succeed with the congregation. I have watched you.”

Really it was very uphill work with this young lady; but see how beautiful she was, and besides she would have a little property. Mr. Hagbut drew nearer still to the shrinking hot form that held the ice-cold heart.

“Are you cold, dear Miss Turner?” he drawled.

“No, I am uncomfortably hot,” she snapped out. “I think that I am not well. I think that I shall go nearer the door, if you will let me pass.”

He was forced to do so, and with a great gasp she went and sat beside Mr. Morley and her father: her father seeing the Rev. Hagbut, his future son-in-law, looking exceedingly foolish, went to his assistance, and bound up the cracks in that savoury vessel, leaving Rebecca sitting with Mr. Morley.

Now Rebecca knew Mr. Morley to be a Dissenting minister, as her father described him, of “great unction”; consequently she regarded him in the light of her natural enemy, and was prepared to do battle with him on the very smallest provocation. She could not, however, avoid confessing that he was a considerable improvement on that other horrible fat man with a head like an egg.

Indeed she might have said, a very great improvement, indeed. Mr. Morley was a man with a well-shaped head, good and singularly amiable features, hair but slightly grizzled, curling all over his head, a fine deep brown complexion, and a beautiful set of regular white teeth, which contrasted well with the complexion, and which were pretty frequently shown by a manly, kindly smile. He looked a man every inch of him, although his face was gentle even to softness.

He had been watching Rebecca and her troubles. He had been brought here as the friend of Mr. Hagbut, he having to-day preached a sermon for him. He had of course been welcomed heartily by Mr. Turner, who in the openness of his heart towards a minister, and a friend of Mr. Hagbut, had let him know the high honour which was in store for Rebecca. So Mr. Morley had watched while talking to Mr. Turner: and he had seen brutish, low, calculating admiration on the one side; and on

the other a depth of loathing aversion which was terrible to him. He said to Mr. Turner—

“They will be happy, you think?”

“Any woman would be happy with such a man of God as Mr. Hagbut.” And when he had said it, he scorned himself. Yet for mere decency’s sake, seeing that Morley knew, he put in the rider, “If she does not love him in the way of the world now, she will get to do so. Hundreds of girls would give ten years of their life to be in her place.”

“That is, doubtless, true,” said Morley, quietly, and the conversation went on to other matters, until it so chanced that the beautiful girl, with rage and fury in her heart, came and sat beside him.

He had a pleasantly modulated voice, a voice of cultivation too, and he spoke to her.

“The wind has quite gone down,” he said.

“Has it?” she answered. “I have not noticed.”

“Yes, it has quite gone down. But it blew hard down at our place last night: I expected some of my chimney-pots down, several times. The *Eliza*, in the outside tier, broke from her moorings, and has stove the bows of one of the screw colliers; yes, it blew very hard from east, shifting to south-east: are you a sailor at all?”

“I know nothing of the sea.”

“Pity, you should. I am half a sailor myself. I should know something about it, for half my work lies among sailors. Have you never been to sea at all, then?”

“I have never left this most utterly abominable spot in all my life.”

“Well, I don’t want to flatter you,” said Morley, “and so I will say that it is intolerably dull. My place is considered almost the very worst and most wretched in London. I am surrounded with sin, crime, and occasionally fury and murder; but I would sooner be there than here.”

“Where do you live, then, Mr. Morley?” said Rebecca, becoming interested.

“At Limehouse.”

“Is it uglier there than here?”

“Very far uglier. This place is, in all that the eye desires, a paradise to it. If an educated man, like myself, were doomed to live in Limehouse in idleness, he would break his heart.”

“You have not broken yours.”

“No; I am too busy,” he replied, laughing.

“Where is it?” asked Rebecca.

"Down the river. Down where the ships are."

"Where do the ships go to?"

"All parts of the world. You can get on board a ship there, and go anywhere."

"Do any of them go to countries where there are no chapels?"

"Plenty, I am sorry to say."

"Where you can do exactly as you please, and not be called to account for it afterwards?"

"Certainly not. No such ships sail, because there is no country such as you describe. Not in all the countless millions of stars which you see on a frosty night is there any such country. Such ships would have plenty of passengers, though."

"It is a weary world, then," said Rebecca. "Do you believe in the immortality of the soul?"

"Certainly I do."

"Some do not. Is it not so?" asked Rebecca.

"Scarcely any," said Mr. Morley.

"Yet it is such a comfortable doctrine, I should have thought it would be popular. To think, to believe, that death *did* end it all, and that there was to be no more trouble, no more headache, no more anger. It is really not so, then?"

"Assure yourself of that. Ask yourself—Is it conceivable that the *will* which causes you, so mysteriously, by acting on your muscles, to raise your hand to your head—the will which may prompt you to a noble deed, or save you from a shameful fate—can *die*? I could speak at length of these things to you, but there is your father beckoning."

She rose without another word, and went towards her father, who was sitting beside Mr. Hagbut; he moved away and pointed to his seat.

She, however, stood, and Mr. Hagbut, rising, took her right hand between his two fat ones, and looked her in the face with his sweetest smile.

She was deadly pale. There was too much fat covering the nerves of Mr. Hagbut's hand, or he would have felt, surely, the creeping horror in hers. It shrunk so from between his palms that it slid out and fell dead and pale by her side before he had time to speak.

"I was going to ask," said the unconscious nobody, "a little favour of my sweet Christian sister. I was going to ask if I might see her to-morrow morning for half an hour, just to ask one little question, to which I think I shall have a favourable answer. May I come?"

"Oh Lord, yes," gasped Rebecca. "Come to-morrow and let us get it over," and so left the room abruptly.

"She has taken him," said Miss Soper to Mrs. Russel, as they blundered home together in the fog.

"Lucky girl, of course she has," replied Mrs. Russel.

"He will have trouble with her," said Miss Soper. "I know girls. I've had girls throw themselves out of window before now, and he will have trouble with her."

"Well, if you come to that, Henrietta," said Mrs. Russel, growing confidential in the dark, and in anticipation of the little hot supper which Miss Soper and she were about to partake of together, and blundering up against Miss Soper in her fat walk, "she will have trouble with him. For although he is a Saint, he keeps his saint's temper pretty much in the cupboard; she'll have to manage him, that's what she'll have to do. I know men, and the management of them. I've *had* to manage them."

Mrs. Russel's knowledge of men was confined to two, her husband, whom she had managed into death by worry and *delirium tremens*; and her son, whom she had managed into enlisting into the 40th Regiment, now in New Zealand, from which island he had dutifully written, saying that "now the water was betwixt 'em, he could express his mind more free." Which he proceeded to do.

Morley and Hagbut walked eastward together through the fog, and Morley was the first to speak.

"Hagbut," he said, "are you going to marry that girl?"

"Assuredly, my brother," said Hagbut.

"Have you thought of what you are doing?" asked Morley.

"Indeed, yes, with prayer," said Hagbut.

"But, see here, Hagbut. You are as shrewd as another. Let us speak as though we were of the world, worldly. Are you not making a great fool of yourself?"

"I think not, brother Morley," answered Hagbut, far too shrewd to give up such advantages as a religious phraseology gave him. "I think, looking at the matter even as one unredeemed and still of this world, that it promises well. The girl is fair to look upon, and she will have a little property."

"But do you think she cares for you?"

"Undoubtedly. No constraint has been put upon her, and she has as good as taken me. Our roads diverge here, dear brother. Good-night."

Omnibus after omnibus passed Mr. Morley, yet somehow he preferred to walk, and set his head steadily for Fenchurch Street,

dark as the night was. And as he walked he thought, and thought of one thing only — this approaching marriage. It seemed to him so monstrous a proceeding altogether. If the girl consented it would have been bad enough, but against her will——

Why the girl's beauty alone ought to ensure her a good match, an excellent provision with any one of a dozen young men of her own age; and she had fortune too, he heard; and for the whole of it to be offered up at the shrine of that ugly, windy donkey, with the education of a charity-school boy, and the manners of a boor. How pitiful a case for one so beautiful! And then he went on thinking of her beauty, and pitying her all the way home. Which was not good for the peace of mind of the Rev. Alfred Morley.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH REBECCA LETS HER SENTIMENTS BE KNOWN, NOT ONLY TO HER LOVER, BUT TO THE WORLD IN GENERAL.

AND, alas! for poor Rebecca. She was in very evil case indeed. She would have cried aloud for help from man, but there was none to help her; as for prayer, religion had been for a long time hateful to her, so that way out of her trouble was denied her.

The phase of anger and scorn in which her soul had stayed so long was gone now she was alone. The reaction from it was a feeling of plaintive, pathetic loneliness, infinitely mournful. This in its turn produced silent tears; they in their turn produced calm, and calm thought.

Thought sadly lame, incoherent, unconsecutive, but thought still. Here was an evil, to her most real and horrible, to be escaped from. What were her chances alone against the world?

Sheer angry persistent defiance and wrath? How would that do? Well enough as long as it lasted; but could she depend on it to last for ever? Would they not beat her by sheer perseverance? Hagbut and her father were uncompressible men of strong physical capacity: could they not wear her out? merely *tire* her out? For look at her now; tired out in body by her long effort, as weak as a child, sitting on the floor crying and calling on her dead mother, without even energy to go to bed. A

fortnight's fight with her father would reduce her to this state permanently, and they would be able to do as they liked with her. *That* would not do.

Craft, procrastination? No, that would not do with her father. She knew him too well for that. It would only weaken her hand, and the end would be just the same. No, try again, poor Rebecca!

The Roman Catholics! Her face brightened, and her breath came fast as she thought of that. If she ran away to the Roman Catholics, they would take her in for her mother's sake, and shelter her behind their altars. She believed that she had been baptized into their Church; if so, they would know in Cadogan Street, and that would give them a right over her. It seemed for a moment a brilliant idea, but it was soon dulled. The case of Miss T—— was fresh then, and she knew that as a minor (she was but nineteen), a policeman had only to trace her, her father to demand her, and she would be brought back a culprit, in a worse case than before.

Evils fairly faced vanish away one-half of them into thin air. She had found no solution as yet, yet she felt if she could only go on thinking, that one would come. It made her almost glad in her desperation, when she first got the faith, that she certainly should find a way out of her trouble if she only thought long enough. So that, when some wandering fiend said to her, "If the worst comes to the worst, Putney Bridge is close by; and when the tide is ebbing strong there is an undersuck there which gives back nothing alive," she rose, laughed, and shaking out her black sharply curled hair before the glass, looked at her beauty, and said: "Not for him. I will bed in no Thames ooze for such as he."

"Suicide, no!" she said, proudly; and all in a moment, as she said the words, a crude, shapeless idea came rolling into her brain, dazing her, and making her gasp.

Whence came it, this frightful amorphous idea? Was it only the last result of some mental serites, tangled beyond the possibility of reduction; or was it a direct suggestion from the unseen powers, in which we all believe in one way or another? It was so shapeless at first that it made her head whirl; but as she, in her desperation, steadily faced it, it crystallised itself, and took form. The form it took was ugly enough, yet it looked beautiful to her beside the hideous fate to which she was to be condemned to-morrow.

Suicide! Why did lost women commit physical suicide? Why did weak, cowardly women gather courage to leap off dizzy places into dark water—off places which they shuddered to look at with

their protecting lovers' arms round their waist? What gave them this preternatural courage? Why, they had committed suicide before. They had done that which left them no place in this English world. Done that which made them a loathing, and a scorn to father, brother, sister—to every one, save mother—and she had none. What if she were to pretend to do that which would make it at all events utterly impossible for this horrible old man to marry her. What then? Was there no escape there? There was.

For her father she had no pity whatever. He had brought it on himself, and it would do him good. Her mother had been her only friend, and he had ill-treated her mother. She knew the whole of the old story, partly from memory and partly from cross-examining her foolish sister Caroline. She had no pity for him. He knew well her hatred for this match, and had pitilessly thrust it on. Let him look to himself.

But here came a difficulty. How was she, after she had gained her own object, to rehabilitate herself? What means should she use to prove herself utterly stainless and innocent before the world, whenever it should suit her to do so? She walked up and down an hour thinking over this. Without holding in her hand irrefragable proofs of her own innocence, she would have played her part too well, and would have made it impossible for her, at the proper time, to hurl back the scorn of their miserable little world upon itself. The way out of this difficulty came on her suddenly, like a clear flash of light; and she laughed at her own stupidity in not thinking of it before.

The night wore on, and she packed away her clothes in her drawers, putting a few necessities in a carpet-bag. She counted out her money—£18 odd—more than sufficient for her purpose. Then she sat down and wrote a short letter to her father:—

“SIR,—It has pleased you, in spite of my frequently-expressed repugnance, to urge on my marriage with Mr. Hagbut.

“As I desire to remain single I have chosen, between two evils, to disgrace myself and my family sooner than contract such a monstrous alliance.

“Your daughter,

“REBECCA.”

It was not broad daylight until half-past six. At which time Jim Akin, the costermonger, and Mr. Spicer, the sweep, saw her come out of the door with her carpet-bag, close it behind her, and walk straight away, apparently in the direction of Putney Bridge.

"Off at last," said Jim Akin.

"Wonder she hadn't gone afore," said Mr. Spicer. "She's a' stood it a dratted sight longer ner I thought she would. Who's the young man, then?"

"Doubt there ain't nerry one," said Jim Akin. "I ain't seen none round.

"She is off to the Catholics, then," said Mr. Spicer. "Her mother was one, and so is my wife. They'll take good care on her."

"I am glad of that," said Jim Akin, the costermonger; "for she is a gallus kindly, good wench. She's got what I call a young 'art, that gal has. She nigh kep my old girl when I was in—in the 'orspital."

Mr. Spicer, possibly from a habit of regarding the world in his early youth out of the tops of chimneys, very early in the morning, when there was little smoke, was a philosopher. This, also, was one of his clean days; he had had his bath overnight, having sent one of his assistants to the "black bed," and was a respectable tradesman instead of a grimy ruffian. He philosophised thus:—

"Gals is much the same as boys is. I've hammered and leathered a boy into a cross flue, and he has choked hisself for spite. I've coaxed another boy into that self-same flue, and he has gone through it like a ferret. That gal has been leathered too much morally. I hope she will do no worse than going to the Catholics. Meanwhile it ain't, neither for you nor for me, to give the office on her."

Mr. Hagbut, coming for his answer at ten o'clock, found a scared household. Turner had not gone to business. He received Mr. Hagbut in the parlour.

Turner's state of mind was fury, nothing short of it. His daughter had utterly disgraced him, and perhaps it was fortunate for her that she was beyond his reach. At work in Turner's mind just then there were all the elements which, boiled in a caldron together, produce a thorough hell-broth of blind anger. His religion was very precious to him. I cannot say why, for it gave him no comfort, but one sees it every day; and his pet scheme had been to increase his influence in this sect by the marriage of his daughter to their most popular and most *répandu* minister. It was to him like a marriage with a duke; here his vanity was touched. Again, he prided himself on being master in his own house, and had been defied and beaten. Once again, as a man of the world, he knew that he had been an utter fool in trying to force that beautiful, self-willed daughter of his on this dreadful, crawling old imbecile: here his self-love was touched. Once

more, he saw now that he had acted like a fool throughout: and here was the *auctor mali*, the dreadful, unctuous old man, with a head like a bladder of lard, turning his hands over and over before him, and asking how his sweet sister was this bright morning.

Turner, who *was* a man, saw the utter folly of the whole thing in one moment.

"If by your sweet sister you mean my daughter," he said, "she is utterly ruined and lost. She has run away, God knows whither and with whom."

"Our dear sister fled?" said Mr. Hagbut.

A man cannot, however religious, continually sit in law courts without knowing something of the ordinary language of his fellow-men. Mr. Turner was excited and angry, and, in his language at least, fell away from grace.

"I speak plainly. She has run away; and, upon my soul and body, I admire her for it. I wish I could get the wench back again, though. There were worse wenches than she. You and I are two fools, I doubt, Hagbut."

Mr. Hagbut began, "Peradventure——"

"Say perhaps," said Turner, testily.

"Perhaps, then," said Mr. Hagbut, solemnly, "your other daughter is at home, likewise the handmaiden."

"What do you want with them?"

"Only, in the presence of Christian witnesses, to say that it cannot be with me and your daughter as it was before. The few sheep in the wilderness——"

"What do you mean, man?" said Turner, sternly. "Do you mean that it is all over between you and my daughter?"

"Doubtless," said Mr. Hagbut. "The flock——"

"Hang the flock!" snapped Turner. "Can't you see that my poor girl would not touch you with a pair of tongs; that she would sooner ruin her reputation (and she's a high-spirited girl), than have anything to do with you? Of course it is all over. We were fools to think of it."

"Doubtless," said Mr. Hagbut.

"Look here, man," said Turner, speaking as the man and the lawyer; "there must be one thing understood about my girl. She has left her father's roof, and I don't know where she is gone. But if you, or any of your good women, dare to say one word against her character, without legal proof, by the living Lord I'll make you sweat for it, or I'm no lawyer! Perhaps I've been wrong with the wench, perhaps I was wrong with her mother; but you mind what I tell you."

So Rebecca had won her first move. She would have laughed

had she known it, but she did not. She had taken down a tress of grey hair, and had twisted it in one of her own black curls, and had said: "How long will it be, Elizabeth, before they make my hair as grey as yours with their nonsense?" And old Elizabeth had said: "Well, we shall see the sea at the next station, and I have not seen it for forty years."

That was not a lucky day for Mr. Hagbut. He could not go near any one without being sympathised with, which was very terrible. Some lamented with him, some piously congratulated him on his escape; while the more influential of his congregation, those who could not be well refused, made him tell them all about it. A jilted man always looks more or less of a fool. The world has always put in force its penalty of contempt against those who are unsuccessful in love or war; and Mr. Hagbut knew that he was undergoing it, and, using his vast powers of looking foolish, he really succeeded in doing so. A most unsuccessful day!

Meanwhile, one thing was certain. Whatever had become of Rebecca, she would be persecuted by no more offers of marriage.

CHAPTER V

TWO LITTLE FRIENDS.

LEADER Street, Chelsea, is one of those streets which utterly and entirely belong to the poor. It is a place where you may see the very poor at home in person, and looking at the stalls and shops where they traffic for their daily bread, may guess how hard it is for them to live.

The largest and most frequented shop in this street, was the coal and greengrocery shop, dealing also in potatoes, bundles of firewood, and ginger-beer. The grocer's was a Saturday-night shop, as was also the butcher's. The greengrocer's, however, supplied some littler want, which might arrive at any moment. Half-a-hundred of coals, a bundle of wood, a couple of pounds of potatoes, were things in demand all the week round. Tibbeys were seldom still.

Tibbey himself was a very little man, like an innocent little bird, with a little hop, and a twittering way of serving in his shop that reminded you of a robin or some other soft-billed bird. Mrs.

Tibbey was much larger, blonde, stout, and grey, and she looked as though she might have been something of a beauty in her youth; and indeed she was beautiful now, as far as an expression of gentle goodness could make her so.

This couple were perfectly devoted to one another, and were uneasy at the absence of either. In religion they were Primitive Methodists; and they were childless.

Except indeed by adoption, as it were. One child, whom Mrs. Tibbey had nursed, was very near to both their hearts, and always remembered in their prayers night and morning. They had risen from their knees, and almost had her name in their mouths, when the door opened and she stood before them.

Rebecca, ready dressed for travelling. Before they had time to ejaculate, she said, "Libber, dear, I have run away to you." Whereupon Mrs. Tibbey, as a preliminary measure, folded her in her arms.

"And I want my breakfast, please; I am so hungry. Please put some more tea in, Mr. Tibbey, for I shall want a deal, and I hate it weak. And could you let me have the cat? Then I will tell you all about it."

She was as wilful with these good souls as she was at home; but ah! with what a different wilfulness.

"Yes," she said, as they began bustling about, "I have run right away, Mr. Tibbey. They were going to marry me to Mr. Hagbut."

"My pretty bird," said Mrs. Tibbey, pausing in her preparations, to swell in pigeon-like indignation, and coo out her wrath, "my pretty love, how dared they?"

"Like their impudence, was it not?" replied Rebecca, very anxious not to make the matter look too serious. "Well, you know I was not going to stand *that*—far from it—and so I have run away to you, Libber, to make my terms from a distance. And you will lend her to me for three days, won't you, Mr. Tibbey, just to take care of me?"

"Miss Rebecca," said the little man, "you may, I think, depend on Elizabeth, as heretofore, always doing what is right. And what is right in this case, my dear young lady, is that she should go with you where you will, so that hereafter the finger—do I use too strong an expression, and give offence?"

"Just what I mean," cried Rebecca.

"Then I will use that strong expression;—that the finger of scorn may never be p'inted. And indeed," continued the good little man, with the ferocious air of that most pugnacious bird the robin, "I should like to see the man who would dare."

What could Rebecca do but kiss him? She did it, however; and Mr. Tibbey toasted a muffin with many ominous shakes of the head, as though he would say, "I shall have to look some of these folks up some day, if they don't mind their manners."

It was a dingy little parlour enough (scrupulously neat, in spite of the smell of the stock in trade), though in addition to the smell which I have smelt elsewhere, but have always, from early association, associated with Leader Street, underlying the whiff of red-herring, cabbage, and coal, with perhaps a whiff of turpentine from the bundles of firewood, there was the true, low-London odour of soot and confined humanity. Yet what a free little paradise it was to Rebecca! The inevitable going home was days off in the dim distance as yet. She was free, and with those who loved her; her heart was so light that she could have sung aloud.

These simple, gentle Methodists, primitive in more than their methodism, saw nothing very extraordinary in the step which Rebecca had taken. It seemed to them that she had acted with singular discretion in coming straight to them. Living there as they did, in perfect purity and innocence, with sin and vice and poverty all around them, they were well used to far more terrible things than the mere fact of a young lady, sore-bested by an uncongenial marriage, taking refuge with them. Only one remark did Mrs. Tibbey make on the subject during breakfast.

"Why, my dear soul, your good pa must be mad to think of such a thing! Why, he is sixty!"

"He is very rich," said Mr. Tibbey, blowing a saucer of tea. "He is the richest minister in that communion. He got no less than twenty-five-thousand-pound with his last wife. She was the widdler of Ackerman of Cheyne Walk, and he convinced her of sin and married her."

"Law!" said Mrs. Tibbey, evidently not disinclined to hear more. "That would be a great snare for a minister. Got all her money, did he?"

"Every shilling," said Mr. Tibbey, holding out his cup for some more tea. "It was thought down the river-side way, that her cousin, Mrs. Morley, would have had some of it, for she brought him into the house. But she didn't."

"What Mrs. Morley was that?" asked Rebecca, interested.

"Minister Morley's wife of Lime'us 'ole, my dear. She is dead some years now. Overworked herself, trapesing round after him among the poor of his communion, as lives round the 'ole, and up Ratcliffe 'ighway, and all along shore there to Wapping. And she died, poor dear. Ah! the folks in their communion say that she was never truly awakened, and fell away from grace

to the extent of refusing the ordinances altogether. But he loved her as I love Elizabeth. And she died."

"I know Mr. Morley," said Rebecca, eagerly.

"Then, my dear, you know a man who is as a sweet savour in God's nostrils. He is not of our communion on this earth; but we shall know him in Heaven, and her too, maybe."

"What *was* Mr. Morley?" asked Rebecca.

"A gentleman, my dear."

"I *thought* so," said Rebecca.

"Yes, a gentleman and a scholar," said Mr. Tibbey; "with more of the knowledge of this world, and of science—falsely so called—than is good for a true Christian; for the knowledge of this world is vanity."

"I should like to judge for myself about that," thought Rebecca.

"He *were* a doctor, but he got converted, and joined their communion. He was from Cambridge College—one of the Simonites, I think they call 'em—but he pitched it all up when he got converted. There is the shop. Now you and Elizabeth see what you are going to do." And so the good man went out to weigh coals.

"Elizabeth," said Rebecca, "we must go from here this morning. Are you afraid to go to Broadstairs?"

"Not in the least. Would, indeed, very much like it."

"Then get ready," was all that Rebecca said; and the good woman departed to do so. The simple woman was entirely at the girl's disposal. She dreaded nothing but sin, and as far as that was concerned, would have trusted her darling anywhere. But she knew also, that as long as she kept by the girl, her fair fame could not be touched; and she went with cheerful recklessness.

It was not long before they had found an omnibus in the King's Road. An hour and a half afterwards, they were whirling along through the chalk pits of Kent, towards the sea. In the evening they were having tea together, at an open window in a little cottage, with the sea gossiping to them at their feet; the Foreland a dim black wall, close on their right, and the white-winged ships creeping away to happy lands, where there was no chapel and no Sundays.

So said Rebecca. "It is good for me to be here," she said; "I could stand everything, except that man, if they would let me come here three days in the year. I could live six months in the recollection, and the next six on the anticipation. Libber, dear, let us run away again next year."

It was pleasant enough by daylight, it was pleasant enough by

moonlight; but in the dark, dark morning, when the moon was down, and she awoke in the dark in a strange room, how was it then? Ghastly, horrible! What frightful machinery was this she had put in motion for the temporary destruction of her own good name and her father's? And how was it at that weary, ghostly old house at Walham Green? What were they saying of her? And she must go back to it in three days—a marked girl. Would she dare do so? or would she die of fright, of sheer terror, as she approached it? There was the horrible old house, and there waited her angry father at the door. She had only taken the sole means to save herself from a fate worse than death; and now, in the darkness, she felt like a murderess and an outcast. What had she done that God should plague her so?


She could lie no longer in her horror. She rose and went to the window. The very blessed sea talked no longer under her windows, but had gone far out on to the sands, and was whispering there. There was no light in the sky, and there was darkness and terror in her soul.

Darkness and terror! The crowning horror in Frankenstein is the closed room where the monster must be. Her crowning horror was the old house at Walham Green to which she must return and meet her father. The men who study a certain kind of wickedness say that what is wanted with women is opportunity, which is a foul lie. But I believe that if the Rev. Mr. Hagbut had been able to take advantage of his opportunity, and had pressed his suit just then, poor Rebecca would have accepted him and thanked him. As she was in the dark, in the strange room, that man, coarse brute as he was, would have been a release from the closed, dull, disgraced house at home, with all its traditions and respectabilities violated in her wildly audacious person.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RETURN.

THESE were night thoughts, how different were those of the day! The sea had come back, and was rippling and splashing crisply at her feet. The bright sun was overhead, and a brisk east wind was driving the ships past the Downs and down the channel. A pleasant sight. The outward-bound ones, full-



breasted, crowded with canvas, gay ; the home-going ones, sail-less, melancholy, towed by steamers against the wind ; however, one need only look at the outward-bound ones just now ; in three days' time one may think of the others.

Many ships went to and fro before Rebecca was tired of looking at them. She got more and more interested in them as time went on, asking all manner of questions about them from the boatmen and others on the beach ; simple Cockney questions, which puzzled those she asked in their very simplicity ; even when her weary head was turned homeward they were still in her mind's eye.

Her despair at going back was so dull that it was nearly painless. "What signifies a little agony, more or less ?" Here, however, had been three days of which they could not deprive her ; they would last her a long time, these three days.

She came home about nine o'clock on the Saturday night. Her father opened the door, and she passed in quite silently, and, taking off her bonnet, sat down, whereupon her sister Caroline began to cry, which assisted Mr. Turner in opening the conversation.

"You may well cry, my poor child," he began ; "you must be worn out with this three days' anxiety, my dear ; your sister seems none the worse for her disgraceful escapade."

"I am hungry and I want my supper," was all she said. "You can scold while I eat it. Only make a finish and end of it as soon as you can."

"Rebecca, where have you been ; and what have you been doing ?" said her father.

"I am not going to tell you," she replied ; "I am not going to say one word."

"Are you aware that Mr. Hagbut's visits have permanently ceased, in consequence of your extraordinary conduct, and that your character is not worth *that* ?"

"It was you who drove me to this course by your cruel abetting of that most unnatural marriage. If my mother had been alive, you would not have dared to do it. Have you anything more to say ?"

"I have," said Turner, getting thoroughly angry ; "your sister's character and position are affected."

"What, old Carry ; why what has she been doing ?"

"I mean that her position is affected through you. Are you aware that young Mr. Vergril seemed exceedingly likely to pay attention to your sister, and that your behaviour has rendered such a course impossible on the part of any member of such an exceedingly strict family."

"Give Carry the money you were going to give me, in addition to her own, and he will come fast enough, I'll warrant you. My poor old Carry," she went on, kissing her sister, "I hope I have not lost you your sweetheart. They drove me to it, you know."

Carry only introduced an imbecile whimper into her crying, as though she had been playing the organ, and pulled out another stop. The stop would not go in again, and so she arose swiftly and went hysterically upstairs.

"Poor Carry," said Rebecca, dolefully, "I am very sorry for her; she would have liked the persistent self-inflicted misery of that Vergril family, and would have enjoyed herself thoroughly." So saying, she rose and rang the bell, and, when the maid came, ordered supper.

When the maid was gone, Mr. Turner had a few more words to say. "You are carrying matters coolly, Rebecca. But there is one thing I wish you distinctly to understand. The next time you leave my house without my permission, you leave it for good."

"I quite understand that! You drove me out of it, and I went for my own purposes. I shall not go again. Have you anything more to say?"

"Nothing at present."

"This may seem an unpropitious time to say what I am going to say, but I will say it, nevertheless," resumed Rebecca, very quietly and calmly. "Father, I remember something, and I know more. I know that this has always been a miserable and most unhappy house. I know that you and my mother were bitter enemies, instead of being as husband and wife should be. I know that all your recollections of my poor mother are painful, revolting, shocking; and I know that I, being like her in person and temper, have kept them alive. We have never been friends. Say that it has been my fault. I say that I am tired of it, and wish to be friends; I am sick of this everlasting antagonism of will between us; it has done no good. I have resisted you, but you are as obstinate as ever; you have tried to coerce me, with what success I leave the last three days to tell. Why should this battle—this unnatural battle go on? Cannot you let me love you? Such a little yielding on your part would make a heaven out of this most miserable world. Will you answer?"

Not one word would he answer, except to say, "Have you anything more to advance?"

"Yes. I left here three days ago, a desperate, hardened woman, casting my good name to the winds, to save myself from a fate worse than death, which you had prepared for me. During

those three days I have been lapped in love—a love abundant and never failing, and surrounded by a religion purer and gentler than yours, father; a religion which hopeth all things, and believeth all things. And in spite of my bold bearing and my hard words, I have come back softened and purified. Father, life is not so very long, and we shall, I suppose, never part again. If I have said hard and bitter things since I came into the house, will you forgive them me as I forgive what you have said, and let us learn to love one another?”

No. His heart was dumb to it. He had never yielded to the mother, was it likely he would yield to the daughter? He told her in a surly voice to show her repentance and amendment by duty and obedience, and then began supper, as she did also, feeling obstinate, angry, and humiliated, but also having “a mighty disposition to cry.”

She spoke next, hard as iron. “My health will suffer if I am entirely confined to this house, and you would scarcely wish that. May I walk up and down the lane, if I promise not to go out of it? You may set Mrs. Russel and Miss Soper to watch me, if you like; or, if you think it worth having, I will give you my word of honour.”

“You may go from one end of the lane to the other, but no further. I’ll have no scandals any more. I ain’t so rich as some think, but I’m well trusted—very few dream how much. And my good name is more precious to me than any money. And I’ve tried to keep it good,” he went on in a loud excited manner. “And any other would have made thousands, where I’ve made hundreds; and no one has ever dragged my name in the dirt except your mother and you. And I served God faithful,” he went on, now beginning to weep, poor fellow. “And I tried to keep my name clean: the greatest in the land have said to me, ‘Turner, you are not a lawyer, you know, you are a friend, we can trust you here, your name is unspotted;’ and God has afflicted me like this. First your mother, and then you.”

Rebecca’s bolder and more generous nature, which indeed was, ill-directed, the main cause of her petulance, was thoroughly aroused. She went to him and took both his hands, saying, quickly—

“Father! father! your good name shall not suffer from me. I am as innocent as the day. I can prove my innocence at any moment. Do you think that *I* have done anything unworthy of you? Do you think that I did not leave my proofs behind me as clear as noon?”

“Proofs! silly girl, yes, but who will believe them? You little

know this wretched world and its tongues. Do you think that anything will ever quiet old Russel and old Soper's tongues? You are a fool if you do."

"And who are they?" asked Rebecca, loftily.

"The tongues of the world we live in. The tongues which would turn against me first of all, and ruin me in our religious connection, if anything went wrong. You don't know the world, and are a fool."

"I wish you had been away with me these three days, father; you might have got to despise this little squalid world of ours."

But he remained sulky and silent. Yet in a surly strange manner he took her into his confidence before he went to bed.

"You are a bold, courageous girl," he growled. "I needn't ask that; this week's experience shows that."

"I believe that I have good courage, father."

"That's lucky, because your sister Carry is a nervous fool. And you are a light sleeper, too, I know."

"Yes, the slightest thing awakes me."

"Then see if you can make yourself useful. If you hear the very slightest noise in the night, you run to my bedroom just as you are, shake me, and pull me out of bed. You will find a light burning. I am apt to be mazed and stupid when first awakened. Are you afraid of fire-arms?"

"I never saw any. I will do what you tell me. I will trust you thoroughly."

He went to a drawer in the sideboard, and came back with a Deane and Adams revolver in his hand.

"See here," he said. "If I am not fairly awake you will find this on the stand by my bed's head. If any man comes into my room before I am ready, take it—so—hold the barrel towards him—so—and keep pulling the trigger back—so. And screech murder, the while. Can you do that?"

"I will try. But why is this? Have you much money in the house?"

"Money and worse."

"Could you not pay it into the banker's?"

"No, I daren't. I know too much. You would not be fool enough to talk of this?"

"Is it likely?" she said, smiling. "Will you say good-night?"

"Yes, I will say good-night. But mind, your treatment depends on your behaviour. If you think you are forgiven, you will find yourself mistaken. I'll have obedience."

And so he went. And she began putting away the consumable

portions of the banquet, that portion of the family supplies which, by a fiction current in such houses, the little servant is supposed habitually to pick and steal (their little servant would as lief have eaten molten lead). She had put away the cheese, the sugar, the whisky, and had locked the cupboard. She had got the ham, the loaf, and the lettuce on a tray, and was s'arting downstairs to lock them up in the larder away from the cat, who was all the time playing a game combined of cat's cradle and puss in the corner, between her feet, mewing in a bland whisper, when she drove the tray into her father's chest, and brought him up short, as he returned.

"Ho!" he said. "Putting the things away. That's right."

The cat at once intertwined herself between his legs and amicably tripped him up.

"Bother the cat!" he exclaimed; "but she reminds me, though. I don't want to make it any duller than I can for you, Rebecca; only I will have order kept. You asked me last year if you might have a dog. And I said, no."

"You did."

"I say yes, now. You can have a dog, if it is a pleasure to you——"

"May I have a large one, or a little one?"

"Any size, but let him be a barker, a tearer, a dog that never sleeps. Silcox has got dogs that would tear the heart's life out of a man, if he bent his black brows at them, and the other day I saw his grandchildren playing at horses with them. Get a dog like that if you can; but get a barker."

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW LIFE.

IN the whole history of insurrections I honestly believe that comparatively few are entirely unsuccessful. The position of the insurgent party is, in most instances, after a short time, bettered. The fact is, one would fancy that no government is strong enough to stand many serious insurrections, and therefore, as soon as its stomach or its safety will allow, gives magnanimously what it would be dangerous to refuse to a high-spirited and well-organised minority—like Rebecca.

Her insurrection was not entirely without its fruits. If you come to consider, a daughter, who has shown herself able and willing, under provocation, to absent herself promptly and secretly from home—making you look like a fool, and harassing you with inexorable terrors—is by no means a young lady to be trifled with. I once, in the range of my own personal experience, knew a young lady of tender years, in a certain school, who had the singular physical power of being ill under the slightest contradiction; I mean ill as people are ill off the North Foreland. That child ruled the school, and learnt just what she chose—which was nothing.


Turner was going to have no more escapades in his house. I Rebecca had only known her power, she might have done pretty much as she liked, but she did *not* know it. Her feeling was, that she had utterly overstepped natural bounds, and had been on the whole, for her father, kindly received home. Her feeling about her escapade was one of sheer terror, now that the whole manner of life was all around her. It would take a still more dreadful provocation to make her take such a step again.

Women, trained for so many centuries to entire dependence, are not good at a long, steady defiance to association and habit. That they are capable of it, the whole world knows; but if it is forced on them, the sustained effort which it costs them makes them coarse, fierce, and unwomanly. This continual effort of defiance will soon make, from habit, a woman's voice hoarse and man-like.

Rebecca happily escaped this. Her father had yielded, grudgingly indeed, yet still had yielded; more than she had hoped for. Her condition was improved. The heretofore forbidden lane, with all its wonders, was at all events hers now. With fresh, healthy vitality, with the curiosity towards the world and its ways of a child in a wood, this lane, with its swarming, dirty population, was as a deeply interesting book to her, which she was eager to read.

She was the first moving in the household on Monday morning: the intervening Sunday she had passed in bed. She roused the maid, and left the others sleeping. When they came down, there was breakfast ready, the Bible set by her father's plate, his boots in their place, the newspaper warmed and ready for him, and his rasher of bacon hot in the fender. These facts, being taken by the allied powers as denoting contrition on her part, were received by her father in dumb silence, and by good Carry, who always trumped her father's trick, by a wondering sniff or two.

She did not care. She was to go into the lane, and have a dog



of her own. Hagbut was a thing of the past ; she would soon win these two over.

The portion of Scripture which Mr. Turner had to read that morning was rather unpropitious to his purpose of twisting a moral out of it to hurl at Rebecca's head. It was the journey of Jonah to Nineveh. He thought that he should have to leave her moral exercitation to the prayer, when, stumbling on, he came to the fact that Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, exactly the time which Rebecca had been away. He emphasised this point so strongly, and paused so long, that Carry groaned, and the little maid—aroused suddenly from the orthodox religious coma, into which she always fell on the celebration of any form of worship, public or private—exclaimed, "Laws a mercy me !"

It was a great, although unforeseen point or hit, this suggested parallel between Jonah and Rebecca ; but Mr. Turner was too old a hand not to see that it would not hold water too far. Rebecca thought that he would have twisted it into the prayer ; but he knew better. He started from an entirely new basis of operations. "It don't matter," said Rebecca ; "I shall catch it somehow." And so, when her father said, "Let us pray," she knelt down, wondering how he was going to do it.

He led up to his theme in the most masterly manner. It was feebly like some Scotch sermons, which one dimly remembers. You know the preacher's theme from his text, and you hear him go away into subjects apparently irrelevant, possibly three vague themes, which seem to have no relation to his text. You sit puzzled, and yet pleased, while he spins his first crude mass of yarn off into a single thread and leaves it. Then he spins you another heap of yarn into a thread ; and leaving that, another ; and then, taking his three threads, he spins them into a cord, which brings you back to his original proposition, and his text. Then you take out your watch, and find that you have been sitting, with your intellect at its highest power, for one hour or so, and have thought it twenty minutes. A good Scotch sermon is not a thing to be despised. The Scotch are not considered to be devoid of brains, and they like such sermons.

Turner's prayer had no similarity to a good Scotch sermon more than this. Rebecca knew that she would be his theme, and wondered how he would handle it. He handled it well enough for an Englishman. A Scotchman or a French preaching priest would have done it better ! but it was creditable in a mere amateur.

Turner began by airing the old question of the permission of

evil. The higher power doubtless knew best, he wished that there might be no mistake about *that*; but, at the same time, he, Turner, did beg and pray the First Cause to reconsider his opinions, and take to governing the universe more in accordance with his, Turner's, ideas than heretofore. He proceeded to offer a singular number of practical suggestions to the First Cause, which he hoped might be practically attended to on the first opportunity. And then he began to draw up to Rebecca, who knelt with her head on one side, wondering what he was going to say.

It was in the thanksgiving part of the prayer that he overthrew and demolished Rebecca, to her great admiration and wonder. She had begun to think that he was going to leave her alone altogether, for she was at a loss to understand how he could have any great thanksgiving to make on her account; but when he began to thank the First Cause for such afflictions as had been sent him, and also for the strength which had been given to him in bearing them, she saw how he was going to do it—and admired.

She wondered much at his ingenuity in attacking her under a form of thanksgiving to the Deity. She wondered still more at the ingenuity of the details; but what she admired most of all was the singular self-complacent egotism which underlay his whole prayer, and which cropped up at every point. She knew of old her father's habit, common enough to men who live in a little world, of talking of himself to other men; but to hear him, while attacking her, point out his manifest excellences to the Deity, and then compare himself to a miserable worm, filled her with pure astonishment. She had never before seen how entirely her father was given to self-worship. Abraham's pleading was reasonable; her father's was utterly unreasonable. When he came to the ultimate point of summing up his utterly blameless life, and thanking Providence for afflicting him with an undutiful and rebellious daughter to keep him from the sin of self-glorification, she was pained and dazed. She wanted to love him; how could she when he was so far from all else that she loved? Her father's religious exercise this morning had by no means a good effect on her. She was angry and sulky when she rose from her knees.

And she had meant to be so good. She left Carry to administer the little cares of domestic life which she, in the warmth of her heart, had prepared. She was silent and angry, and her father congratulated himself on having brought her to a sense of sin. He had brought her to a deep hatred of his form of religion.

She ate her breakfast in silence, but, keeping in mind the

admissions of last night, saw that they must be kept before him. Towards the end of breakfast she said—

“I am to have a dog; and I am to walk up and down the lane; that is allowed. I wish that some arrangement might be come to under which I was not to be prayed at by pa before the maid, but that I suppose is hopeless. I can only say that if it happens again, I shall rise from my knees and walk in the lane. I hate it.”

“My dearest Rebecca!” said poor Carry.

“You may well say your dearest Rebecca, you two,” said Rebecca, sullenly. “I meant to be as good as gold this morning, and submit, and be cheerful, and all that sort of thing. But I wish it understood that I will not be prayed at by pa, and thanksgivinged for by pa, or by any one else. I may as well state my intentions at once. It is more than probable that very shortly I shall join the communion of the Primitive Methodists.”

This was not quite such a dreadful threat to Mr. Turner as it was to Carry. Certainly, Mr. Turner reflected, the poor little Primitives were a low and poor sect, and the secession of one of the members of his household from a sect so rich as his, small though it was, a sect which was looked on with envy for its wealth, would be as sad a thing as the secession of an ultra-evangelical in the National Church to Wesleyanism, or the Baptists. Yet, after all, if she go, it would be one way of accounting for her eccentricity. He put on his boots, and went to business in tolerable humour. If she did not do worse than go to the Primitive Methodists, and if that abominably sleepy policeman would keep his eye on the house for a few months, matters would right themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

LORD DUCETOY.

THE moment that Turner had shaken the dust of his own house off his feet, the little anxieties of that house were cast in the background, and he was in another world. For, to tell the truth, at this very time Turner's religion, and Turner's domestic troubles, were actually swamped in another great matter—had become for a time, as it were, relaxations. The man was living two disconnected lives (unless Rebecca could connect them), and the least

disagreeable was to him almost a relaxation. This great matter shall develop itself.

On Walham Green he caught the white Putney omnibus as usual; but not as usual did it drop him at the bottom of Chancery Lane. He got out at Arlington Street, Piccadilly, and made his way quickly to a private house in Duke Street, St. James.

"Is Lord Ducetoy up?" he asked of the quiet-looking servant in black who came to the door.

Lord Ducetoy was up, had finished breakfast, and was ready for Mr. Turner. He was shown upstairs into Lord Ducetoy's presence, and he looked on him with very great curiosity.

A handsome, well-made, young man enough, light in hair, blonde in moustache, with the deep brown of the Western prairies still on his face; standing, with his back against the chimney-piece, and lovingly wiping a gun with his handkerchief.

"How d'ye do, my dear Mr. Turner?" said Lord Ducetoy. "Thanks for coming so promptly, for I am in trouble."

"In trouble, my lord," said Turner, very seriously. "Please tell me how."

"Well, it seems that I have not got any money."

"Your lordship has plenty of money. I can let you have a thousand pounds at this moment."

"Then I wish you would. I wrote a cheque for a hundred pounds on my uncle, Sir Gorham Philpott, yesterday, and they have cashed it certainly. But they have written to me to say, as there is only £37 10s. in their hands, they request, either that more money may be paid in, or that our account may be closed."

"Oh, that is their move, is it?" said Mr. Turner.

"That is their move, my dear Mr. Turner," said Lord Ducetoy. "Rather a disagreeable one for me. You must know, as my uncle's old man of business, that I never expected to come into this earldom, and this money. My uncle's death was utterly unexpected; my cousin's death at Madeira, equally so. I was hammering about in Canada, trying to invest a certain thousand pounds I had, so as to bring me in a living, when I suddenly found myself an earl, with a considerable income. Coming home, I find my cheque nearly dishonoured at my own uncle's for one hundred pounds. I am a quiet fellow, but must live. I should be glad of some money."

"There is plenty of money," said Turner.

"I should like to see some of it," said Lord Ducetoy.

Turner sat musing and looking at Lord Ducetoy for some little time. At last he said—

"I suppose you know your estates are rather heavily mortgaged?"

"I have heard as much."

"And that the mortgages are held by Sir Gorham Philpott & Co.?"

Lord Ducetoy had not heard that.

"Do you know that Sir Gorham Philpott & Co. are now Sir Gorham Philpott & Co., Limited?"

Lord Ducetoy laughed, and said, "that he was not aware of the fact: but their ideas of credit were certainly limited."

"They are, my lord," said Turner. "For limited liability is only another name for unlimited irresponsibility. Do you know nothing of the family jewels, of the family papers?"

"I know that there are great jewels, and cash, and papers. I suppose they are at the banker's."

"My lord, they are nothing of the kind. They are at my house. My lord, the limited bank, long really bankrupt, which has been trading under the name, once respectable, of Sir Gorham Philpott, holds the mortgages on your estates, about the only asset they have. It has not seemed to me expedient to break with them, and bank with another house, lest they should inconveniently foreclose. But I have kept all out of their hands that I could. I, as executor under your uncle's will, have received the plate, the jewels, the deeds, under my own roof; and the responsibility of them is turning me grey."

"Could we not send them to Child's or to Drummond's?"

"My lord, we owe Philpott's money—a great deal, I doubt."

"Can we pay it?"

"Yes, we can pay it. But their name is—and when the smash comes we must take our chance with the others. I don't want our jewels and plate to be put into their bankruptcy."

"Then keep them where they are," said Lord Ducetoy. "I can trust you." And he whistled as he rubbed his gun, and said, laughing, "Well, I suppose now I have got money, I shall never be happy again. There is one thing I wish to say, in our prairie way, Mr. Turner. My mother says that I can trust you through thick and thin; and so I mean to, for *she* never was wrong in her life. So, if you find it possible, I should like to make our relations as friendly as possible. There is, by the way, a touch of New England in that, because I can't do without you. I don't mean that we are to rush into one another's arms, but if we try we may get friendly in time, I don't think it will take long." Here he got very red. "I only just remember my cousin. I hope to

know her husband better. Will you dine with my mother and me to-day?"

Turner went up to him, and taking his hand, looked him frankly in the face, and said, "Did she ask me?"

Lord Ducetoy nodded.

"Then tell her *No*. It is best all over and done with. Tell her, also, that the trouble we thought past has begun again in my daughter. Good-bye. You may trust me."

CHAPTER IX.

THE SKYE TERRIER.

REBECCA'S good humour came back the instant she was outside the garden, and into the lane. She had tempted Carry to come, but Carry wouldn't. "You had better come," said Rebecca, "we shall have some amusement. I am going to Jim Akin about a dog, and it will be very pleasant." Carry would have liked to have gone very much, but she had said that she wouldn't in the first instance; and consistency, or as low people call it, obstinacy, is the brightest jewel in the British female's crown, so she declined to enjoy herself with her sister; and visited her self-imposed querulousness on the little maid.

Neither Jim Akin nor Mr. Spicer the sweep was out. With Akin it was always a slack day on Mondays, having worked Chelsea, principally Jews-row and Turks-row, with periwinkles, whelks, and shrimps the Sunday afternoon, and resting before going out to buy stock from the market gardeners. With Mr. Spicer also it was a "clean" day, few owners of houses of sufficient respectability to require their chimneys swept by the hand of a master, caring to make preparations for the sweep on Sunday night.

Very respectable Mr. Spicer looked, in his off-duty clothes, comically unlike the hideous fiend-like figure he was when on duty. Rebecca had the advantage of the respectful counsel of these two excellent people on this occasion.

"If you please, Mr. Akin and Mr. Spicer," she said, after the usual salutation, "I want to get a dog; pa is going to let me keep a dog."

They were both deeply interested at once. Mr. Akin being

professionally more accustomed to conversation, dashed into the subject at once.

"Warmint or general, Miss?"

"I don't quite understand," said Rebecca; and so Mr. Spicer, a sententious man, much looked up to in the row, leant against the fence and defined after the Aristotelian method.

"A warmint dog, Miss, as his name implies, is a dog as is kept for the killing of warmint. Now there's a many kinds of 'em: bull-dog, bull-terrier, fox-terrier, black-and-tan-terrier, toy, Dandy, and Skye. Similarly there's varieties in the nature of warmint, as badger, pole-cat, weasel, and rat. Of badgers there is country badgers and old hands. Of pole-cats there is wild and tame. Of rats, why there's as much difference in rats, lor bless you, as what there is in Christians. I've seen big rats as a new-born kitten could kill; and contrariwise, one of my young men went to enter a well-bred year-old toy with an old rat, and I'm blessed if the dog didn't cut and run for his life, howling, round the lanes, and the rat after him."

"I seen it," said Jim Akin.

"But I don't want a dog to kill anything," said Rebecca.

"Miss wants a general dog, I expect, miller," said Jim Akin to the master chimney-sweep. "Tip her some of your advice now."

"General dogs, Miss," said the miller, complacently, "is like warmint dogs, various; and I never seen none that was much 'count, takin' into consideration what dogs was made for. Still Providence made 'em, and the fancy gives prizes for 'em, similarly as they do for fantails and pouters, and other rubbish that were only created for showing and dealing. If I had my will, Miss, there should be no prizes for any pigeons except carriers, and none for any dogs except real warmint."

"Greyhounds," murmured Jim Akin.

"And you may add pointers and setters," said Mr. Spicer; "but they're gentry dogs. When you are a gentleman with a moor in the 'ighlands, talk about 'em; not now."

"Miss wouldn't want a fighting dog?" suggested Jim Akin, accepting the rebuke.

"Do she look like it, neighbour?" said Mr. Spicer, almost severely.

"A fighting dog ain't half a bad thing to mind a young lady, if she wanted to go a walking far by herself," said Jim Akin, not to be entirely driven from his point.

Mr. Spicer was very fond of his neighbour, but he had to ignore him, he was getting low.

"With regard to general dogs, Miss, which were your views?"

"Well," said Rebecca, "I should like a dog which would bark if it heard a noise, and a dog I should be fond of. I think I should like a little dog the best. I think I should like a little hairy dog, like the Queen's in the picture, you know, which is begging to the macaw for its biscuit; if it did not cost too much."

I know nothing of the private life of Mr. Spicer or Mr. Akin; when I am thrown against gentlemen in that particular circle of society, I ask few questions. If any of ourselves had no education, and associated with, bought and sold with, ay, and intermarried with the criminal classes, should we look on the lighter crimes with the same detestation we do now! A man whose wife's brother has been transported, and yet who gets treated as a respectable and trustworthy person by the district inspector, seems to me to be in his way meritorious. If a stray dog follows him home, or if a strange pigeon come into his trap, why, he is possibly not so chivalrously particular as you or I should be; when you get to the very verge of the criminal class, you must make allowances.

Jim Akin and Mr. Spicer interchanged a glance, and then Jim Akin spoke. "I have got a little dog in my back yard, Miss, which you might care to look at."

"Undeniable character," said Mr. Spicer. "Never 'tised, but character un-de-niable, against all the Pleece in creation."

Rebecca assented at once, and they went in through Jim Akin's close-smelling house, which had a mingled scent of washing, dirt, children, cabbage-stalks, baby, and cheese; and out into the little back yard, separated from the neighbours' back yards by a low, broken paling. There was no vegetation in it, except, at the farther corner, an elder-tree. And at the foot of the elder-tree there was an American flour-barrel, and at the entrance of the flour-barrel, sat a little tiny innocent dog, chained up and looking very unhappy.

It was a very beautiful little Skye terrier, a dog worth money, but grimed with ashes and soot, unkempt, unwashed, utterly and entirely miserable and woebegone. It was a dog which had been cared for and loved, and tended in its time, so carefully tended that it had lost its instinct of self-care, and had lost its mistress, or let itself be stolen, and had come to this. It cowered when it saw Jim Akin and Mr. Spicer; but when it saw a lady with them, it looked up at her with its light hazel eyes, and held up its poor innocent little paw.

Her father might well call her a fool. I suppose she was a fool according to his light. Her heart seemed to swell suddenly

within her, and her eyes not all unready for tears, for the little dog, out of its misery, had appealed to her, as Friday did to Crusoe. She went straight to the barrel, undid the dog, and took it to her bosom.

"I will buy this dog of you, Mr. Akin," she said, without turning round. "My father will pay for it. Send in a moderate price to him, or he will not let me have it. I will pay the difference. I will have this dog."

"Will you let me give you the little dog?" said a voice, close at her elbow.

She turned quickly round. It was Mr. Morley, the Dissenting minister, who stood close beside her.

CHAPTER X.

MR. MORLEY.

Nobody likes to be caught suddenly in a sentimental mood. Every true-born Briton hates it almost as much as he hates being caught in (respectable) sin. Rebecca had just been caught in a sentimental mood, over a grimy Skye terrier, in company with a chimney-sweep and a costermonger, by a Dissenting minister. In the revulsion brought on by a nearly strange face, the situation, instead of being really beautiful, as it was one minute ago, was in the highest degree ridiculous—as she thought.

"How did you come here, Mr. Morley?" she asked. "I am surprised."

"I came to see you, and I saw you come in here, and I followed you."

"I am much obliged. My father's house is over the way. I think you asked me if you might pay for this dog? My answer is, No."

"There ain't nothing to pay," said Jim Akin. "Miss has took a fancy to the dog, and she is welcome to her."

"Do you mean to say that you will give me the dog as a present?"

"Certainly, Miss, and will swear to her agin all Christendom."

"I'll take it, Jim Akin," she said. "And I'll never pay one farthing for it, except in good will. If I don't pay you in cash, I will pay you in kind. Let me give you one more chance, I will

give you a five-pound note for this dog ; I will go across the street and get it now."

"Won't take it, Miss. I'll take it out in good will. The mistake as you gentry makes," continued Jim Akin, speaking sententiously, and looking at Mr. Morley, who certainly looked like a gentleman, "is this. You thinks we're for cash, and all cash ; and it ain't so. *I've* got as much money as I want. You gentlemen as studies has got good words. Why can't you give us some of your good words now and again, in a friendly way, the same as I give she the little dog ?"

"Well," said Rebecca, turning homewards with her new treasure in her arms, "all I can say is, that you shall always have good words from me ; and so good-bye. Mr. Morley, I have just been so cross with you. I am afraid you must think me very silly."

"On what grounds ?"

"On the grounds of being very nearly crying for pity over a poor lonely little dog. If your life were as lonely as mine——"

"What then ?" said Mr. Morley, as they crossed the street.

"Why then, I fancy, I may be wrong, but I *do* fancy that you are the sort of person who would be just as likely to make a goose of yourself over such a matter as me."

"That is not grammar, you know, as it stands," said Mr. Morley.

"Then let it be grammar as it sits," said Rebecca. "You know what I mean."

"I am afraid I do ; and what is more and worse, I am afraid it is true."

"Then you *do* sometimes make a goose of yourself ?"

"Have I not come to see you ?"

"That is true enough. Talking of geese, what is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning water-fowl ?"

"That a minister of the gospel had better mind his own business, and not come to visit houses where common stage plays are read habitually."

"Only one single number of *Knight's Illustrated*, I give you my honour," said Rebecca. "You have read it, you know ; at least, you seem pretty familiar with it. Did you *really* come to see me ?"

"I did, indeed."

"I have leave to walk up and down the lane. Will you walk with me ?"

Mr. Morley consented gladly.

"I want to talk to you very much, but about very many things."

You seem to have had an education different to—to the men I have seen here. For instance, you know Shakspeare ? ”

“ I know Shakspeare very well. ”

“ I know nothing of him but this one play. And that is so wonderful—so utterly unlike, both in thought and diction, to anything I have ever seen before, that I can nearly say it by heart. Are the other plays to be compared in goodness to this one ? ”

“ Certainly. In perfect dexterity and elegance, I rank *Twelfth Night* as high as any ; but for no other qualities. *Hamlet* is the finest of them all. ”

“ And what is that about ? ”

“ The old Calvinist business—the business without beginning and without end—which keeps so many preachers on their legs, for the simple reason that, let them turn it inside out as often as they will, there is no answer to it. *Hamlet*, with its beautiful language and deep thought, runs mainly on predestination, the permission of evil and the responsibility in this world and in the next of bad or careless action, committed, as it would seem, almost unavoidably. ”

“ And how does Shakspeare get us out of the old difficulty, familiar enough to me, I am sure ? ” asked Rebecca.

“ The characters all stab and poison one another, ” said Mr. Morley.

“ Mark my words, Mr. Morley, ” said Rebecca, stopping short, and stroking the head of her little dog, who, under the impression that it had only been stolen once more in a different sort of way, was low in its little mind ; “ mark my words, Mr. Morley, that Shakspeare was a man not entirely deprived of understanding. I am aware that you people hate him, curse him from your pulpits, and so on. But there is something in the man. ”

“ I never cursed him, ” said Morley. “ I love him. ”

“ You ! ” said Rebecca. “ I never sat under you. The man whom you call your brother—the man whose opinions you are bound to endorse, does, though. I mean the man Hagbut, for I have heard him. ”

CHAPTER XI.

HETTY'S LOVER.

“ It is not so pleasant in here as in the lane, ” said Rebecca, leading the way in to their dull, narrow-windowed sitting-room.

"This is the place where I am scolded and admonished. I sit here, do you see, and you sit there. Now, will you please begin and get it over."

"Can you suppose that I mean to scold you?" he said.

"I suppose that you have come commissioned by my father to see after my spiritual state," she replied. "Are you not Mr. Hagbut's successor? If so, I am afraid that you will have a thankless task."

"I assure you on my honour," he said, eagerly, "that my visit is solely and entirely to you; that I dislike Mr. Hagbut; that I have no commission from your father whatever. May I go on? I am much older than you, and God knows, I wish you well."

"If you put matters on those friendly grounds, I am sure that you may say what you like. If you intend to be truly my friend in a worldly point of view, I can meet you half-way, for I am sure I want one badly."

"We will sign no compact of friendship," he answered; "but you shall try me. I am an old widower of forty-two, and have a daughter nearly as old as you."

"A daughter!" said Rebecca. "I never heard of that before."

She blushed scarlet as she said it, for she betrayed the fact that he was interesting to her, and that she had inquired about him.

"Yes, I have a daughter," said Morley, stroking his chin.

"Yes; quite so. Hetty (that is short for Hephzibah, not for Esther, you will understand) is nearly as old as you are, I should say."

"I suppose she is very fond of you?" said Rebecca, still in confusion.

"Why, yes," said Mr. Morley, still stroking his chin. "Hetty is very fond of me indeed. But I will show you how much I am inclined to put confidence in you, Miss Turner, by telling you that my dear daughter is not a popular person."

"Is she cross?" asked Rebecca.

"No, she's not cross. When I say that she is unpopular, I mean that she is unpopular among our religious connection, and—well—is a great stumbling-block with them."

"She seems to be very much in my condition then," said Rebecca.

"Very much indeed," said Mr. Morley, the truth being far too great to be kept back. "Very much so."

"Did she ever run away and hide for three days, as I did?" said Rebecca.

Mr. Morley did not answer in speech at all, neither did he look at Rebecca at all. He only looked at space, with a compound expression in which there was, simply in a very slight movement of the mouth, a touch of humour, but no anger or sorrow. Rebecca began to have an intense desire to know the young lady, and said so.

"She would be highly flattered, I am sure," said Mr. Morley, "if I told her so; but I shall not do it, however. By the by, may I presume to be sufficiently in your confidence to ask a favour?"

"Provided it is not a guilty secret, of course," said Rebecca.

"But it is," said Mr. Morley. "Don't say anything about my daughter up here. This part of our connection does not know anything about her. Even Hagbut keeps the dreadful secret, knowing that if anything of her ways was known here, Mrs. Russel and Miss Soper would at once find out or invent quite enough about her to make me perfectly useless as a minister to this congregation, when he wanted my services, as he pretty often does. Besides, the girl is a connection of his. You will not mention her?"

"I will not, indeed," said Rebecca, pleased very much at being taken into any one's confidence and treated like a woman. "I am sure she is good."

"There is good in her somewhere," replied Morley, slightly showing his white teeth; "you will keep my secret, then, from your Russel and Soper; now let us talk of other matters. Your father looks very ill and worn."

"I have been behaving very ill, and have given him trouble. I ran away for three days to avoid doing something he had set his heart on my doing. I am very truly penitent for having given him anxiety, but I would do it again to-morrow; and so would your daughter."

"People don't run away from me," said Mr. Morley; "they are more apt to come after me, I think. While I have been sitting here, and looking out of the window, I have noticed one; he has found the house at last; he rings the bell; he asks for me; yes, and here your little maid shows him in."

And into the room came a magnificent young sailor, with the fresh, wild vitality of the sea shining in his bold brown eyes, showing in his noble free gait and bright free smile. A splendid apparition just risen from the ocean, in his ocean's garb; such a youth as Rebecca had never seen before. As one looked at him with travelled eyes, there came on one dim memories of peaceful seas among soft blue islands far away; of angry, cruel icebergs;

of wild, horrible, staggering nights when ruin was abroad, and death looked with pale face over the steersman's shoulder at the dim-lit reeling binnacle. A youth who had looked steadily at death often, and would look again and yet again without terror, and die at the last fighting fiercely. Still young, handsome, and gentle.

The old narrow-windowed parlour seemed the darker and the dingier for his presence. With the exception of Rebecca herself, there had been nothing there so splendid for many years. Rebecca had never seen anything like this; she had seen youth and vitality before, in Jim Akin and the like, but never anything like this young man. She looked at him with keen curiosity and admiration; and Mr. Morley watched her.

"I have run you to earth, sir," said the young sailor, who, by his dress, seemed of the superior mate class. "Hetty told me that you would be here."

"Chapter of accidents," said Mr. Morley. "What business was it of Hetty's, or of yours?"

"Hetty said that you were to come home to dinner; and, indeed, we want you."

"You want me a great deal, I have no doubt," said Mr. Morley.

"Indeed, we do want you very much," said the young sailor; "in fact, Hetty would not let me into the house until you came. She only——"

"Never mind that, sir."

"Well, I won't," he said, laughing; "but you know that she will not take her pleasure without your sharing it. And if Miss Turner," he added, with a bright smile, "will spare you to us this one evening, we will try to make amends in future. May I be introduced to Miss Turner?"

"This, Miss Turner," said Mr. Morley, "is young Jack Hartop. He is of the salt-water persuasion. The remarkable fact about him is that he never sails in any kind of ship, but what that ship meets with a very serious accident. Likewise, on the occasion of these accidents, some one else is always on the watch. I introduce him."

"I am delighted, I am sure," said Jack Hartop, "to make Miss Turner's acquaintance. In what you may be allowed to call, on an occasion of this kind, the flowering vale of tears, there is little doubt that our acquaintance will be improved to mutual satisfaction. For you must not believe *him* about me, Miss Turner. His bark is worse than his bite. Nobody cares twopence-halfpenny for him. Now, Mr. Morley, are you coming home to dinner?"

"Wait for me at the lane's end, boy, and I will come," said Mr. Morley; and the young sailor bowed and departed.

"What do you think of him?" he said to Rebecca, when he had gone.

"He is very splendid," said Rebecca, dreamily. "I have never seen any one like him."

"He is a splendid sailor," said Morley. "May I tell you a secret which would ruin us all if it was known?"

"There would be a little excitement about it," said Rebecca; "I think you had better tell me."

"Well, then, I will trust you. He is Hetty's lover."

"She must have good taste, then. I should not entirely break my heart if he was mine."

"No?" said Mr. Morley.

"Well, I don't know," said Rebecca. "That young man and I should never hit it off, you know. He seems as if he liked his own way."

"The most biddable lad going," said Mr. Morley.

"Then he wouldn't suit me. Hetty may have him. I want ordering about, I can't take care of myself. But speaking to you as a minister, or, as the Papists call it, a father confessor, Mr. Morley, I confess to you that I could, with very small effort, have fallen in love with that young man. If Hetty has got him, let her keep him. I shall know Hetty one day, I see. For the present I have made my arrangements for marriage."

"I dare not ask what arrangements."

"I will save your cowardice, then; I have, for my own purposes, made it impossible for any man to marry me; and I am going to marry old Tibbey."

"Tibbey, the Primitive Methodist, in Leader Street? He is married already."

"Not him, but his wife. I am going to marry her. At all events, I am going to get out of this house in some way. I would to heaven that I could turn Roman Catholic. *They* find a life and a business for women like me. If I could swallow their miserable superstitions, I could join them to-morrow. Why do not you extreme Protestants make provision for women who are willing to devote their love to God and to the poor, as do the Papists? You cry out at the Papists getting so many converts among women; what is the real reason? These Papists, with a false, low, and I hope moribund form of Christianity, are the only sect which offers a career to an ordinary and ill-educated woman. Whose fault is it that we are ill-educated? You have refused us education, and we are as clever as you. You teach us to play the piano. The

Papists show us a suffering Christ through suffering humanity. They find a sphere for a woman——”

“Which *you* would occupy for possibly a week.”

CHAPTER XII.

HAGBUT'S NEW INTENTIONS.

SHE saw no more of her two new acquaintances for nearly a fortnight, and the old life came back again with almost the old misery and dulness. Yet Rebecca was never exactly as she had been any more. She was more desperately unhappy—that I do not disguise—but her unhappiness now was of a different kind. It was active. Her old unhappiness was as that of one imprisoned in a living tomb from her birth, hopeless, and without any room for fancy, which is one of the greatest mitigators of human ills. She was very miserable again now, but only because dreams, now become possible to her, seemed unattainable. Before this she had no dreams at all: her life was merely a painful sleep. And now, also, she had a companion and a confidant, her little dog.

The man who has never known a woman who will confide to a baby or a dog, matters which she would not confide to an intelligent being, must be unfortunate in his experiences. Poor Rebecca told her little Skye terrier a great many things about herself, in which she scarcely believed as to herself, and which she would have denied with the extremest scorn to any person in the world, unless possibly in deep distress to old Mrs. Tibbey.

She had broken all bounds for the first time in her life. In her desperation regarding her marriage to Mr. Hagbut, she had been forced into arms; into a thoroughly successful revolution. True, she had in her weariness come back, as it were, to Cæsarism; but it rests with the politicians to tell us whether the individual or the nation ever gets back into its old frame of mind again after one good taste of liberty. What has been done once may be done twice. The ruler of a once thoroughly revolutionised kingdom sits uneasy on his throne; and, what is more to the purpose, the subject knows it. At least Rebecca did. And so now, when the house was duller, and her father most disagreeable, instead of “wishing she was dead,” or declaring that she would marry a costermonger if he would only take her out of this, she used milder formulas; only told her little dog that he would drive her to it again, he

would: and that Mab and she and Mrs. Tibbey would go to Ramsgate, and stay there altogether this time; and live on shrimps, and keep a nice little oyster shop, and never go to chapel any more. And if that nasty tiresome Hetty was near, Mab should bark at her.

This babyish nonsense was very good for her. She had had too little of it in her childhood: books like Hans Andersen's had never been seen in that house. It was well for her that she had still child enough left in her after her embittered life, only to talk to her little innocent dog in a petulant childish way about Hetty; for she might have talked in a very different one a little time before. Yet one thing she told her dog now, but which she never confessed to herself, was that she hated Hetty.

Hetty the unknown, Hetty the innocent. It was surely unreasonable.

It would be merely confusion of counsel to try and account for it as she did. That Hetty was free; that she could come and go; that she had a father who loved her; and was not watched by two pernicious old trots (meaning Mrs. Russel and Miss Soper); she did not believe in all that herself. Hetty was welcome to all that. She had been inclined to admire Hetty, until Mr. Morley, for reasons of his own, had told her that the young sailor Hartop was her lover.

She had not cared at the time; if he and Hetty had come arm in arm, the next day, and made love before her, she would not have cared much, more particularly if Mr. Morley had come too. But this grand young sailor had left his image on a late awakened and fully developed mind, and it would not go. He was the first really splendid man she had ever seen.

And he had appeared, only to draw her only friend, Mr. Morley, away from her. They had left *her* at once, to go after this Hetty, and all their schemes, and goings-on down at Limehouse, the gate of freedom: for you might get on board a ship in Limehouse, and you might sail away anywhere—to the happy islands in the Western Sea, where there was no chapel-going, or tea-meeting, or Sunday school, all of which Mr. Morley wished to establish there; or even further, to those islands where you could do as you pleased, and escape the consequences of your own actions; in which islands Mr. Morley did not believe. (This was, of course, only said to the little dog.) But even to her sister Carry she grumbled, after a few days. She told her that she thought Mr. Morley had whisked himself off with his young friend rather unceremoniously.

"I am glad to hear that he has been here," said Carry.

"Yes; he came to see me. And I should like him to come

again. But the young sailor, to whom his daughter is engaged, came and carried him off."

"Mr. Morley has no daughter," said Carry.

"Indeed but he has, though," said Rebecca. "And I wish he hadn't."

"Dearest Rebecca," said Caroline, with just such tact as she had gathered from her station, and her school, "believe a tender sister, when she tells you that Mr. Morley has no family."

"But I tell you he has. Hetty was alive a week ago; bother her."

"You are in a perfect dream, my dear sister," said Carry. "Mr. Morley is perfectly unincumbered, and his prospects are, in a pecuniary point of view, very good indeed. I give you my *honour* he has no daughter. I tell you, you have been dreaming."

"*That* is true enough," said Rebecca. "I have been dreaming a deal too much. But who told you he had no daughter?"

"Mr. Hagbut to-night, at Miss Soper's."

"How did he come to say it there?" said Rebecca, who was beginning to get a little uneasy about this mysterious Hetty's legal relation to Mr. Morley.

Carry was a certain kind of British woman, who, when she saw occasion, would walk clean through half a dozen quickset hedges, without, as vulgar people say, winking her eye. She did so on this occasion, as on many others.

"The fact of the matter is, my dear Rebecca, that Mr. Hagbut has announced his intention to several mutual friends, of paying his addresses to me. He has not committed himself to me in any way as yet; he has not sufficiently studied my character. But he has said, with a view of my hearing it at second hand, that if I should be found worthy of his great position, and if he sees hopes of forming my character to his standard, he will overlook the disgrace which one member of our family has brought on it; and——"

"He is rapid in his determinations," said Rebecca, quietly.

"He is very determined. He is a man to be obeyed. But this is a little past the matter. His opinion is that Mr. Morley is very much inclined to marry you, in spite of all that has happened."

"Yes," said Rebecca, very quietly.

"Indeed he thinks so," said Carry; "and we all rejoiced with a great joy. I consider, that if you are careful, such a thing might be. And in the course of conversation I asked if he had any family; and he said that there was a daughter, but that she was dead."

"He meant dead in trespasses and sins, you know," said Rebecca.

"He said dead," said Carry. "Now you know the whole truth, my dear."

Burning lava over boiling water makes a good explosion, as geologists tell us. There were all the elements of it in Rebecca's heart. She could have killed them all with burning words. For them to *dare*, after her resolution, to buy and sell her like this. The way in which the crust of respectability forms quickly over the lava of revolution is what drives some men, who will not look to the great cyclical advance of matters, mad. And really, Charles the Second and Dryden, as successors and apparently results of Cromwell and Milton, is a bitter pill for a Whig. Men, maddened with this view of things, try to assassinate innocent sovereigns. Can we wonder that Rebecca felt a strong inclination to box her sister's ears?

Only for one moment. She was a clear-hearted woman, with all her faults. She saw her own sister before her, and all her little petty woes and wrongs were forgotten. Easily forgotten, for she had freed herself. Instead of giving way to ill-temper, she gave way to good; and, kneeling before her sister, said—

"Carry, sister! We have always been good friends. In heaven's name have nothing to do with that man. Are you forced. I was forced; but I beat them, the mean tattlers and time-servers. Do as I did, if you hate it. Come away as I did, sister; and see what the world is out of this miserable lane. I will never leave you, dear; no more will Elizabeth Tibbey; no more will Mab. Fly from it, dear, with me. We could keep a little shop, or anything; Mr. Tibbey would tell us. Or we would go to Mr. Morley, and he would tell us what to do. But oh, that man, Carry! There is time to save yourself; in heaven's name think what you are doing."

Rebecca's wild appeal failed absolutely. Carry's mind was too well formed. Rebecca's appeal to her, beautiful in its affectionate unselfishness, if in nothing else, was to her hideous and amorphous—shapeless to her: her sister was a woman with a wild, ill-regulated mind: an object of pity. Yet, in her reply, she unconsciously allowed that there was reason in Rebecca's wild plea to her; for, instead of showing pity, she showed resentment. And Rebecca had so nearly won, that this resentment took the form of anger: anger expressed as she had heard it expressed in her family, a little coarsely.

"You fool, get up, and don't kneel to me; kneel to your Maker. You are the plague of our lives. When I am married to him you will always be held over my head like a whip. The old business was just hushed up, when you must break out. Get up."

She got up at once, but she smiled kindly, too. "You will be sorry for these words, Carry dear, long after I have forgotten them."

"I know I shall, you wicked thing," said Carry, sobbing bitterly. "Why did you tempt me to say them?"

"Because I did not like to see one I love marry a man utterly beneath her, and utterly unworthy of her."

Whereupon poor old Carry gathered up her skirts, and walked through another quickset hedge, consisting of Mr. Hagbut's virtues. Through which we will not follow her.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FRANK EXPLANATION.

WHEN the sisters had parted, Rebecca was very angry again. For them to have dared to use her name like this once more. "Still the question arises," she said, "is it not all their own inconceivable folly? Mr. Morley is far too much of a gentleman to have spoken to any of *them*, at all events, before he spoke to me. He is inclined to like me, and I am fond enough of him; but he does not admire me."

Her father came in, and, without looking at him, she said—"Has Mr. Morley spoken to you about any intentions of his with regard to me, sir?"

"Certainly not!" said her father. "Do you mean matrimonial intentions? Why, you have scarcely seen him; and if Morley had any such intentions, he, with his breeding, would most surely have made himself safe with you in the first instance. Tell us the story, Rebecca; do not let us mistake one another again. Has he shown you any attentions?"

"None whatever, except those of an interested friend. He has been very kind to me."

"Then how has this report come about?" asked her father. And Rebecca simply told him what Carry had told her.

"So you see," she added, "that my name is the common talk of Miss Soper's tea-table in connection with his."

"What an abominable shame! *Who* said it?"

"Mr. Hagbut."

"Oh, I see," said Mr. Turner. "Yes, yes! quite so. My

dear daughter, I have reason to believe *now* that Mr. Morley does really more or less admire you, and that Mr. Hagbut has remarked it."

"Am I never to be let alone?" cried Rebecca.

"Do not interrupt; listen—open your eyes. I have reason now to believe that Hagbut at least suspects that, in course of time, Mr. Morley may come to admire you, and that he has, knowing your proud and uncontrollable temper, put this report about in such a way as may set you utterly against Mr. Morley."

"What on earth is it to him?" said Rebecca.

"Between five and six thousand pounds, my dear. If you marry so well as Morley—marry, in fact, a gentleman of respectability and strength of character, like him—you will have the same fortune as your sister. If you remain single at my death, you will have one hundred a year; if you make a foolish match, you will have eighteen shillings a week, tied up to you, and payable weekly. Hagbut thinks that if he can in anyway get rid of this match, he will net certainly five, and possibly seven thousand pounds."

"He is a villain," said Rebecca, with singular emphasis; "and I always told you so."

"This is rather sharp practice, certainly," said Mr. Turner. "Now, I may have made such sharp practice, or I may not. I can't say. I meet and am friendly with men who would do such things, and I am never angry with them. But I am angry now. For him to put his pudding brains against mine! Oh, Master Hagbut, the Pope shall be the richer for that odd money sooner than you. For him to come lawyer. And over me!"

"Why is my sister to be sacrificed to such a wretch?"

"He is not a wretch. She will lick his feet, and he will let her, and be kind to her. It is the same between priests and women in all churches. I myself would lick the dust off the shoes of any man who could assure me of heaven—still more will a frightened and ignorant woman. He will be very kind to her, and she will adore him. Have you been saying anything to her against him?"

"I fear a great deal," said Rebecca, in downright honesty, expecting an outburst.

"Do not do so again, my dear Rebecca. Nothing can prevent their being husband and wife, and so sow no seeds of discord. Remember that, child. This has not been a happy house; do not use your power to make another such."

What between her father's kindness, and her ideal future of

poor Carry, it was through tears that she promised that she would not.

"Do you like Mr. Morley?" he asked.

"Yes, very much indeed. But I could never think of marrying him."

"Don't let us deceive one another, Rebecca. Is there any one else?"

"No," she said at once. Who could there be? She was not allowed to go out of the lane, and never saw any one. But she said it with so poor an air that her father looked suspiciously at her, and said—

"Well, my girl, we had a great fight, and you won. Perhaps I am older and wiser than when I knew your mother. At all events, if I made errors with her, I do not wish to repeat them with you. I have told you how you will be situated as regards money matters. Further than that, no more constraint shall be put upon you than is now. Do you understand?"

"I am thankful."

"Keep your ears open, and your attention awake, and never repeat what I am going to tell you. When you brought disgrace on this house as you did, that fellow Hagbut came to me to break off his engagement with you, as he was almost bound to do. But the way he did it showed me he was a rascal and a sneak, every inch of him. By heaven! he little knew how near he was being pitched into the lane."

"And yet poor Carry——" began Rebecca.

"Hold your tongue! you have enough to do without minding Carry. Mind yourself and listen to me. You say that no one has your heart; I ask no further. But mind, if there is, and Hagbut knows who it is, he will, if the man is likely to be entirely displeasing to me, throw him against you."

Rebecca sat perfectly silent, and her father saw that there was more than he cared to know. At last she said: "Please, father, has Mr. Morley a daughter?"

"He may have a dozen for aught I know. I only know his eminent character; I know nothing of his domestic life, except that he is a widower."

"Because he told me he had, and told me much about her. And Hagbut denies that there is any such daughter."

"Hagbut is probably over-reaching himself in some way," said Mr. Turner, coolly. "Suppose, for an instance, that Morley had a daughter who had done him discredit, such as yourself, you know, he might possibly be scheming to keep her as long as possible in the background, and make anger between you and

Morley. In which, you see, he has already failed, for Morley has told you all about her. Mind, once more, in conclusion ; if there is any man of whom I should disapprove in this case, Hagbut *thinks* he wins £5,000 by your marrying him, and he will contrive that you should meet him. And so, good-night."

CHAPTER XIV.

HARTOP.

MAB, the little dog, used to bark furiously at strangers in general, and regarded both Carry and Mr. Turner in that light. So, when, two days after the last conversation, Rebecca was told that there was a gentleman to see her, Mab barked all the way downstairs, but on getting to the sitting-room door began to whine and scratch joyously, so that Rebecca thought it was Mr. Morley.

But it was not ; it was only the magnificent young sailor, Hartop. She was sorry that he had come ; and without perceiving her cold reserved air, he came frankly and joyously up to her, and took her hand.

"I could not get to you a moment before ; I have been unloading all the day long, ever since we were in port till to-day. My cousin, Mr. Hagbut, suggested to me that it would be only kind if I were to come and tell you about those two."

Her father's words came on her with a shock. This, then, was the man selected by Mr. Hagbut as the one most likely to make mischief between her and her father. The man of all others the most dangerous.

"Yet how could he have known *that* ?" It was indeed a puzzle, if it were not an accident. All this went through her mind so quickly that she did not keep him waiting for his answer. She said, promptly, "Which two ?"

"Why Mr. Morley and Hetty, to be sure," he replied, wondering.

"Then there *is* a Hetty ?" said Rebecca, with animation.

"There was three days ago," he said, laughing ; "and I think you will find a young person of her appearance, and claiming her name, walking about with her father in the Boopjes of Rotterdam this afternoon."

"She is a good sailor, I dare say," said Rebecca.

"It would be a queer thing for her if she wasn't," said Hartop, with another look of wonder. "But I didn't come here to talk about *her*; I should talk all the afternoon if I began about *her*. Do allow me to assure you that of all the pretty, innocent little birds that fly over the tropic sea, she is the prettiest and most innocent; and of all the brave hearts which beat truest and most steady in the worst gale that ever blew, hers is the truest and steadiest. They will set you against her, but don't believe them."

"Why should they set me against her?" asked Rebecca.

"She broke through rules, you know," said he, seriously. "If she and I had been what we are now, I should most likely have been against it. But that was afterwards. We won't talk of her; you shall judge her for yourself. Now I want to ask you to walk with me. Do come. It is the only civility I can show you."

"I will go and ask my father," she said, and so left him.

Mr. Turner was sitting alone in his bedroom, brooding in his chair, and hearing some one coming, caught up his Bible and bent his head over it; a fact made patent to Rebecca by seeing that he held it upside down.

"Father," she said quietly, as soon as she had shut the door, "the young man you warned me of has come from Mr. Hagbut; and I have come to ask your leave to go out to walk with him for an hour or so."

"No!" cried Mr. Turner, shutting up his Bible. "Why, this is as good as a play. Tell me all about it. Who is he?"

"He is young Hartop, a sailor; Mr. Hagbut's cousin."

"Hagbut knows something against him, then, or—stay, let us condemn no man—he has calculated on my having objections to your marrying a sailor; that is it. Now, my girl, let us have it all out; there is more to come. I have not watched witnesses' eyes for nothing all my life."

"You remember that Mr. Hagbut denied that Mr. Morley had a daughter?"

"Certainly."

"Well, he has such a daughter, and her name is Hetty; and this young man is engaged to be married to her. And he describes her as the most perfect being ever seen. I don't know how I know it, but I do know this—if anything were to come between this splendid Hetty and himself, he would be a lost man."

"Then you see my theory of her being disreputable, and of Hagbut's keeping her in the background to make a quarrel on the score of want of confidence between you and Morley, falls to the ground. I was under the impression that, if there were such a

girl, Hagbut would advise Morley to keep her in the background until you were well committed to him, and then reveal her disreputable existence by means of one of those savoury old catamarans—vessels, I mean. But this theory falls to the ground now, if she is what the young man says she is. She cannot have done anything.”

“She has done *something*, though, and something rather strong. Her own father hinted it to me, and her own devoted lover confirmed it. I don’t want to know what it is, but the young man, who is to marry her, hoped just now, that the good ladies, whom you so well describe as savoury catamarans, would not prejudice me against her. He says she has broken through rules.”

“I wish *I* could,” said poor Mr. Turner, “but I am too old. Go on, Rebecca, we have had less than half at present. You have never got together evidence yet, my good girl, and so you can’t tell by a witness’s eyes whether the story is all told.”

Rebecca laughed, and for the first time in her life, sat down by her father’s knee and leant her head against it.

“You are right,” she went on. “Do you remember that you said—well, if there was any young man with whom I was in danger, who was disagreeable to you, that Hagbut would throw him against me? He has done so.”

“Is there danger with this young man then? Where could you have seen him?”

“In your own house; here, in the presence of Mr. Morley. And there *was* danger about him. And I want to go out a-walking with him. And you are going to let me.”

“Then there is no danger now?”

“Not a bit,” said Rebecca. “He has blown all my fancies to the winds in ten minutes by his clear, manly frankness, just as I created them in ten minutes for myself. No danger at all.”

“That is well,” said Mr. Turner, noticing that, now his hand was very near his daughter’s beautiful hair, there was a strange pleasure in passing his hand through it. “But have you ever been indiscreet about this young man: to Carry, for instance?”

“I could not tell Carry what I had never confessed to myself,” said Rebecca. “Yet it would seem as if Mr. Hagbut had second sight.”

“Carry possibly gave him some hint.”

“But she could not have done so, father. She never heard of him in her life.”

“Then I will tell you what it is, my child. It is only an old dodge of priest-craft, which is now called Jesuitism; as if a real Jesuit would have made such a risk. He sent him here on chance

of confusing counsel, finding himself possible to make the most likely hash of matters, and pick his own interest out—that is all; but Mr. Morley has put you on your guard. Nothing more than that.” And indeed, there was nothing more: for Hagbut often overreached himself.

“Well, he has failed,” said Mr. Turner. “Where is the young man? Let us see him.”

Rebecca, rising, reminded her father that the young man had been waiting downstairs above half-an-hour; and they went to see him.

The young man, splendid as he was in beauty and stature, accustomed to bully all sailors and officials in every part of the globe, was terribly frightened at this dry old English attorney. He and Jack Hord (of Wilmington, U.S., the New York branch of the family, lately enriched, call themselves Howard) had with their stretchers alone kept the boat free from the swarm of monkey-like Portuguese, nearly two hundred strong, gesticulating and showing knives, while the rest of their comrades were half-persuading, half-carrying, that very indiscreet young man, Cornelius Kelly, back to the boat; Cornelius not being in the least drunk, but having been insulted by being called Lutherano, to which he could only answer by howling, “Mono! Mono!” That had been a very dangerous disturbance, as dangerous a one as Belem Castle sees often in these peaceful times. Also this young man had been in other rows of a different kind. His strong lungs and his commanding presence had brought him into trouble before now. While he was in the service of a small house, in a screw steamer off the west coast of South America, he, noticing the barometer and the weather generally, had given orders to get up steam and put to sea, the captain being still on shore, and he dreading a gale. There was no gale, only an earthquake, and he proved clearly that the ship would have been thrown a mile inland, if he had not given these orders; but the captain got him dismissed. In short, this young man Hartop had been in all kinds of trouble and bother, and had never yet shown himself afraid of any one. When his certificate was in question he was as bold and as free before the court as any man. But this dry old lawyer frightened him to death. For a guilty man is frightened before a lawyer, and a sailor hates and dreads one. I think a real sailor fears nothing but a lawyer. What must a guilty sailor feel?

And Hartop was a deeply guilty man. To the people he loved and trusted more than any in the world, to Hartop and Hetty, Mr. Morley had confided the fact that he was going to ask Rebecca to be his wife, if things looked in any way promising; and had at

the same time begged them never to confide the fact to any human being. The poor girl must not be put in a false position again. So young Hartop, being full of kindness and happiness, did not know how much his future father-in-law had said to Rebecca, and was under the general impression that old Turner was a Turk—with a large dowry ready, provided no indiscretion was committed—who knew nothing about the arrangement. And also this Turk was a lawyer, a creature worse than any Turk. So the young man, treading on molten iron, bowed down, terrified, before Mr. Turner.

Mr. Turner could not have known this, but he might have guessed it possible. He was happy, as far as he could be, but the chance of bullying a young sailor was too good to be lost. He did not reassure that young man at all.

"How do you do, sir? My daughter informs me that you wish to take her out for a walk."

"If it met your views, sir," said young Hartop.

"The question is whether it meets my daughter's views?" said Mr. Turner, grimly. "Our neighbours are censorious. But it she wants to go she can."

"I do want to go, pa," she said.

"Then get your bonnet on," he added, and followed her.

"Rebecca," he said to her, following her into her room, "there is no harm in that lad, my child. That lad is in love, and not with you."

"I know that," said Rebecca, cheerfully.

"Then look here," said her father; "don't cross-question him about this daughter of Morley's, this Hetty. It is not fair on him. If she has been a fool he won't care much to tell you about it. Are you *quite* safe, old girl?"

"Quite safe, pa," said Rebecca. And somehow they kissed one another. And Rebecca said, "Pa, dear, why are we not always like this?"

And he said, "Let us try to be."

And so ended the incipient romance of the young sailor Hartop. At least as regards Rebecca.

CHAPTER XV.

REBECCA'S VOYAGE WITH HIM, AND WHAT THEY SAW, AND WHAT
SHE SAW WHEN THEY CAME HOME.

THIS was the occasion of Rebecca's first voyage. And she took her voyage in the sole company of the young man whom she had considered to be dangerous to her peace of mind. And it is singular that he was not so now; now that the brooding engendered by the house and by the lane were no more, he was no longer dangerous at all. But she wanted to talk about Hetty, but did not do so because he did not; and he did not talk about Hetty because he thought her a dangerous subject. For Hetty had broken rules. He talked about the sea, and about the wild free lands that lay beyond Limehouse. He asked her if she were a good sailor, and she answered that she supposed she was no worse than another, and repeated her question, "Was Hetty a good sailor?" and he repeated his previous mysterious answer, "It would be a queer thing surely if she were not."

The wind was free and fresh from the south, and the little steamer went fast and busy from wharf to wharf down the river. Under the bright sun, and the nimble pure air, and the changing of the scene, Rebecca grew happy, and showed her happiness by a thoughtful silence.

"Are you comfortable, Miss Turner," said Hartop.

"I am more than comfortable. I am perfectly happy. I cannot tell why, but it is so. It was wonderfully kind of you to bring me here. I have never seen anything like this before in my life. This is most wonderful and most beautiful."

"It is as good as carrying the north-east trade over the line, to hear you say so," replied Hartop.

Said Rebecca, "I wish we could go to some place where we could see which way the ship was going."

And so Hartop carried her to the front of the little vessel, and set her there. And she said, "Would you be so good as not to talk to me. You sailors smoke your pipes, I know. Would you kindly smoke yours now, and let me sit in silence."

Hartop sat on the deck at her feet, to leeward, and smoked. The little throbbing boat carried them both, past the wharves and the city, towards the sea; she sitting in a Cashmere shawl like a figure-head. From time to time she said to him, "Are you tired?" and he said, "No. He was very happy. Why should he be tired?"

"Because you are not talking to anybody," said Rebecca. "I don't wish to talk; and I am afraid that I am bad company."

"You are very good and comfortable company," said Hartop. "The worst mate of all is a sulky mate, and the next worst is a jawing mate. I took you out for pleasure, not to talk to me. For instance, where were you when you spoke?"

"I was at the island of St. Boronden in the Atlantic. The island where all things go right for evermore," said Rebecca. "Where were you?"

"I don't know that island," said Hartop. "For my part I was crawling along in a fruit brig under Teneriffe, and thinking how Hetty got on in that short chopping North Sea. Break your slate, you know, and tilt the fragment up in the window above the level of your eye, and you get Teneriffe. But lor, *you* can't dream what Teneriffe is. And still less Tristan d'Acunha. And still less the approach to the Australian shore. No man knows what that is till he has seen it. Did you ever see the west front of Wells Cathedral?"

"No. Why?"

"Because it is like Madeira, on the Atlantic side," said Hartop. "But what can you know about islands? You have never seen any." Rebecca had not.

"Islands are like cathedrals. Have you ever seen a cathedral?"

Only St. Paul's it seemed, with a distant view of Westminster.

"Mr. Morley told us you had seen nothing," said this young man. "Now, islands and cathedrals are one and the same thing. They are the cathedrals of the wide, cruel sea, and God Almighty built them with His own kind hands. The cathedrals ashore were built by the priests: the cathedrals of the sea were built by God Almighty's own hands. Think of that, Miss Rebecca. And what is the object of a cathedral? Peace. I have sailed with all creeds, and they all ask for peace; and I tell them all, that after the wild wandering sea, you get peace on an island. I wish we could go to an island—us four together."

Rebecca was too far in dreamland to ask him what he meant by "us four." The river grew yet and yet more busy, and at last the tall masts in the Pool came in sight, the nimble little steamer stopped, and Hartop aroused her by saying, "Will you go back now, or where will you go?"

"Take me on towards the sea and let me be still," she said. And in a few minutes the dexterous Hartop had her on board a boat bound for Gravesend, and they throbbed along on their strange voyage once more.

As the ships grew larger and larger her eyes seemed to expand.

Hartop looked on her with that strange reverential superstition which the highest class of sailor has towards a beautiful woman. The old sailors' fancy is that a ship in full sail, a field of corn, and a beautiful woman, are the three finest things in nature; and the reason they will give you for this is that all of these three things shadow out the hope of increase. For my own part I know many less beautiful superstitions; but that part of it which relates to the beautiful woman was very much in bold Hartop's soul that day, as he sat looking stealthily at her, in the light of his future mother-in-law, thinking that she was really after all worthy even of Mr. Morley; and, moreover, turning over the wonderful fact that she had never seen Hetty in her life. *She* spoke at last.

"Are these the real ships that go down into the great deep sea?"

"Yes," he said, eagerly. "There they are, Miss Turner, ready for anything, from Cameroons to Sydney. See that long-bodied, low-lying screw there. Very sister ship to that Hetty was wrecked in two years ago."

"Has Hetty been shipwrecked, then?" said Rebecca.

Hartop looked at her wonderingly for an instant, but thought, "She knows nothing. It is for Morley to tell her."

"Yes, she has been wrecked three times now. That last time was the time when the Queen wrote to her, and sent her the Bible. I have often laughed when I told her that I would never sail in the same ship with her."

"Wrecked three times!" said Rebecca, half-awakened. "Was Mr. Morley ever wrecked with his daughter?"

"Not likely," said Hartop. "The Lord don't cast his best tools aside like that. It is easy enough, Miss Turner, for a game and plucky girl like Hetty to stand on a cracking, bursting deck, with the cruel sea hurling around her, no hope of life, and keep a parcel of women from going quite mad, by singing of hymns to them, and by telling them of Christ who walked on the waters, as Hetty did; why that is a thing any woman could do. You could do it if you gave your mind to it. Het did that, and Het is a brick. But she didn't do this. It took a man to do this. Mr. Morley went alone into the rowdiest drinking house in the Nevada track in the old times in California. Taylor himself had warned him that he was a dead man if he went, for to refuse drink in that house meant death. Morley laughed at Taylor himself, went into the grog-shop, was challenged to drink, and then cast the liquor on the ground, and before he came out of that grog-shop had given them a piece of his mind. Taylor said that he would not have done it. What do you think of that for instance?"

"I am all abroad," said Rebecca. "It would seem that Hetty is brave, but that Mr. Morley is braver."

"There is no man alive like Mr. Morley," said Hartop. "He don't know what fear is."

"Let us talk about these ships," said Rebecca, "and leave Mr. Morley to take care of himself."

So he told her all about them—where they sailed to, how strangely they leaped and plunged in their agony at sea, for all they were so still and silent now. This one had come from sliding on slowly and silently among towering icebergs, the one beside her was fresh from the palm-fringed quays of the Pacific. So he sat in his gentle loyalty and talked to her, she speaking seldom, but sitting wrapped in herself: he never tiring of talking to her and sitting near her. Little did she dream of the tie which bound him so closely to her; little did she know what sacred and deeply-loved being she was to him; how he and the two others had talked about her hour by hour; how deeply important she was to three people: one of whom she had never seen, one whom she had seen but twice, and a third she had scarcely seen half-a-dozen times. These kind souls had been preparing a home for her in their hearts, and she knew not of it.

It was only when he left her, very late, they having come from Woolwich by railway, at her father's door, that she appreciated how utterly she had lost herself. "I fear he will scold me," she thought, "and our new-made confidence will suffer"; but the maid only said that he was busy, and that Miss Caroline was in her room. Somehow the company of this most excellent and most admirable Carry did not seem in any way to suit this young lady who had been wool-gathering in the moon all day; she took off her hat, and catching up her little dog, walked slowly along the hall.

When she was nearly opposite her father's room-door she put down her little dog and took off her hat, letting her hat fall down by accident. Mab immediately began to run round and round, barking, after her tail.

The noise instantly aroused Mr. Turner, for coming out quickly and closing the door behind him, he found himself face to face, under the light in the passage, with a beautiful and noble-looking woman, draped nearly from head to foot in a Cashmere shawl, with part of her hair fallen down—a woman who looked very quiet, still, and calm, and whom he recognised, to his own astonishment, as his own daughter, Rebecca.

He had never realised her before. He had never truly trusted her before. There was something now in the calm, strong, gentle

face, which made him see an ally, an ally worth all the world. Mr. Turner had been something else before he had been converted, it seemed ; for the first real word of confidence he ever uttered to his daughter, smelt very strongly of the evil odour of the old Adam.

"Where the devil have you been all this time?"

"I have been down among the ships with Hetty's lover, Jack Hartop," she said. "I am very sorry, father, but I was so happy——"

"Hang Jack Hartop," said Mr. Turner, in a whisper. "Come in here, and hold your tongue. I want your help, child ; take up your dog and nurse it, it will be an excuse for not talking."

"Hetty is brave, but Morley is braver," was what she thought. "Let me see what I can do." So she took up Mab, stilled her and passed in, to find two men in her father's room, whom she had never seen before.

The first her eye rested on was a gallant-looking young gentleman, Lord Ducetoy. She had seen a specimen of his class before, had been with one all day, indeed, so her eyes turned to the other, who was a man the like of which she had never seen before, and which, I hope, we may never see.

A noble-looking old gentleman. In his dress, in his hands, in his complexion, there was gentleman written with no unerring hand. Yet sunk in a heap on a chair, with limp limbs, bowed head, and an appealing, whipped hound look in his handsome face. She had never seen such a fine gentleman before ; and she had never seen such a hopeless look of humble pleading woe. Mr. Spicer the sweep on Sunday, or Jim Akin the costermonger, looked grander than he.

"My daughter," said Mr. Turner, as he brought in Rebecca. "Lord Ducetoy, Sir Gorham Philpott."

"You have brought in the young lady to put a stop to this conversation, I suppose?" said Sir Gorham.

"That is the case exactly," said Mr. Turner. But Lord Ducetoy and Sir Gorham, both heated, continued it.

"I never harmed you, Ducetoy. That protest from the bank only came from one of the rascally directors. Why should you serve me thus?"

"Because, uncle, as I have told you before, I do not desire that my plate, jewels, and bonds should go in the bankruptcy."

"And as I have told you before, the mere re-deposit of them would just enable us to pull through. If the chattels and papers so long left in our hands were now deposited again, it would give confidence in quarters where we want confidence, and pull us through."

"Uncle, the utmost I will do will be to pay in £500, and not withdraw my account."

"I have never, I swear solemnly," said Sir Gorham, "done anything to injure any human being. I worked hard at that bank, and we sold it for two hundred thousand pounds. Since then I have been living as a country squire. By my connection with religion I attracted deposits from Christian widows and orphans. It is not I only that am ruined, for my estates will not one-half stand the drain on them. I could stand an almshouse myself (God knows, I wish I were alone with God in one now), but all these widows and orphans are to sink into poverty through their trust in me. I profess, and I ruin widows and orphans, all because my nephew refuses to deposit papers and jewels which would pull us through. And my poor son. Oh, my poor son! And so you won't pull us through as you might? The mere fact of your moving them to another banker's is ruin to us."

"I tell you, uncle, that I will not remove my account."

"Your account. Our only assets are your mortgages. These papers, you have moved them to another banker's. Where are they then?" said the old man, with his first flush of fire. Turner answered—

"Sir Gorham, the papers to which you allude are in a place which renders it unlikely that they will ever be used in a criminal court against any one. I am sorry to close the conversation in this way, but consider it closed."

Sir Gorham said not one word, but rose firmly and calmly, and walked towards the door. Lord Ducetoy said, "Good-night, uncle," but the old man never answered him. Mr. Turner was going to escort him to the door, when he suddenly found himself confronted by his daughter, with a candle in her hand, who boldly and firmly put her hand upon his chest and pushed him back. Saying in a whisper—

"That is a broken man, he wants a woman with him." Turner bowed his head reverentially and went back. Sir Gorham went downstairs with Rebecca holding the light.

"You have lost your money, sir, have you not?" she said.

He answered, "Yes."

"A good many people who come here have lost their money," she said, briskly. "I wish I had lost mine, all the trouble I ever had in my life has been through the money my father is going to leave me when he dies, which will be the bitterest day of *my* life. Keep up your spirits and laugh about it."

"You cannot laugh after seventy, madam," said the old man;

yet she fancied that he walked out into the dim dark night more cheerfully for what she had said.

CHAPTER XVI.

A CONFIDENCE OF THREE.

WHEN she came back Lord Ducetoy was walking up and down, and saying—

“It would have been perfectly monstrous for me to do what he proposed. I might have ruined myself and gone to Canada again to help him; but to help an unlimited Company, no. You will continue your trust for friendship’s sake. Ah, here is my cousin. Cousin, if you were engaged to the finest girl in the whole world—who, I am happy to say, has not ten pounds—you would scarcely put a considerable part of your property into bankruptcy to please your uncle?”

“As I never was engaged to the finest girl in the world,” said Rebecca; “and as I have no uncle, I cannot answer the question, Lord Ducetoy. But it is supper-time, and I am very hungry, for I have spent most of the day among the ships down the river, in company with a very handsome young sailor, a man I am getting more and more fond of every time I see him: a young man who will be fairly in a position to marry after his next voyage.”

If Lord Ducetoy had lived only in England he might have mistaken her. But he had been to the Westward, and had seen what pure and true gallantry may exist between man and woman with the most entire freedom of innocent speech. Mr. Turner’s brow grew dark when she said this. Lord Ducetoy laughed, and said, “You are bridesmaid, then; and who is the bride?”

“Hetty Morley is the bride,” said Rebecca, at supper, with her eyes wide open; “but what *she* is I cannot conceive. She has done something extraordinary; has pulled down the pillars of the Philistines’ temple in some way. But I want to speak about the old man whom I saw out. Be tender with him, you two. I mean my Lord, and Father.”

“Believe me we will, Miss Turner,” said Lord Ducetoy. “Believe me that we mean nothing else. He will never want

for anything he has been accustomed to till the day of his death. Tell my cousin that, Turner."

"Why do you call me cousin?" said Rebecca.

"Your mother was my first cousin," said he.

And soon after that she went away; but her father told her not to go to bed. Lord Ducetoy said, when she had gone away—

"What a splendid creature. How have I angered her?"

"By mentioning your cousinship, my Lord. In our case, our family connection with yours has not been happy; the girl knows something of it, or her instincts have told her. And instead of harking back to the traditions of your order, or staying in the respectable mean of ours, she has cast herself into utter Radicalism, which has given me great trouble in my religious connection. The girl does not know a duchess from a dustman's wife."

"Well, I got the same way of thinking in the prairies," said the honest young fellow.

"Yes, there is no Radical like a young Whig," said Turner, with a sneer.

"I shall get it all knocked out of me as I grow up, then?" said Lord Ducetoy.

"Undoubtedly," said Turner, suddenly and keenly, some old gleam of Puritan democracy flashing out irrepressibly. "In your class the metal never rings true. It can't. Every word you say is said with a view to excuse your order, to excuse its mere existence."

"We are afraid of your attacking our property, you see," said the youth; "you democrats are always holding that over us; that is what makes Tories. It is odd that a man like you, who have made so much money by the mere legal waifs and strays of our family property, should be a Radical. I am. I have land in Canada, and land in the United States, and if you don't know it, I can tell you that society in New England is much pleasanter than I can find in this cockneyfied England."

Mr. Turner was not prepared with arguments. This young lord was mad. *At that time.* He would not be considered quite so mad now. The idea of a man of many acres, and high position, craving for the rest and peace of pure democracy was horrifying to him. His religion was tolerably democratic, certainly; but he had never reduced it to practice.

There was one thing he knew, however, and practised, too, which he had got from his religion—mercy.

Rebecca was waiting for him in his bedroom, and she began—

"What is the matter about that old gentleman?"

"I kept you up to tell you," he answered. "He and his brother sold their bank to a company, and retired on their property, leaving their accumulated property liable to the claims of the limited company; and his brother has died without any children; and the old man has left his eldest son in the bank, and both father and son, to keep things square, have forged names. They have forged my name among others; and I have got the forged papers in the house; and they know it. And I want to spare the old one if I can; but the young one knows I have his forgeries here, and he has set men on—for burglary, no less. If those papers were to go out of my hands and get into the bankruptcy which is coming, those two men, father and son, would go to Portland. If I were to move the jewellery to another banker's it would be known, and bring on the smash sooner. And so it is all here, and you know it. Thirty thousand pounds are under that bed. So keep awake, and keep your dog awake. Give me a kiss, and go to bed now."

CHAPTER XVII.

A WEDDING.

As the little story runs on, we must come again to Mr. Hagbut's affair.

Was this actually Carry? Yes, it was actually Carry. Rebecca had helped to dress her, but Rebecca scarcely knew her, when she came into the room in her modest bride's dress. She was so pretty and so bright that Rebecca scarcely knew her own sister.

Rebecca was by no means acting as bridesmaid, far from it. In the first place, her father had rebelled against bridesmaids altogether, and in the course of a somewhat peppery conversation with Rebecca, had said that she herself, considering what her relations with the bridegroom had been, had much better stay away. But Rebecca, getting more and more sure of her position with her father every day, had declined to stay away.

"Not see old Carry married!" she said; "I am sure I would not miss it for all the world. She has been a dear, good, loving

sister to me, and has borne more petulance from me than I ever have from her."

"Then you don't feel any spite against her or him?" said Mr. Turner.

"Law, pa, what nonsense!" said Rebecca.

Although there were no real bridesmaids, at the same time two young ladies were, as Hartop or Morley (or, for that matter, Hetty) would have said, "told off" to act in that capacity. They were from Miss Soper's late school, and they wept as copiously as any bridesmaids at St. George's, Hanover Square. Carry did not feel at all as if she wanted to cry; but she thought it was the proper thing to do, and cried hard.

The neighbours came in and chattered and giggled—Mrs. Russel and Miss Soper among them. After they had come in and saluted the bride, Miss Soper drove her sharp elbow into Mrs. Russel's side, and said—

"Is *he* coming?"

"Who?" said Mrs. Russel.

"Morley."

"I don't know," said Mrs. Russel. "Don't shove like that; you've broke two of my ribs, I do believe."

"Where's she?" said Miss Soper.

"Who?" said Mrs. Russel.

"Rebecca."

"I don't know," said Mrs. Russel. "She will hardly have the face to show, I should think. I wish you would get out of that trick of ramming your elbow into another person's ribs when you ask a question. I'm black and blue—No. Why, that's her, ain't it, again the wall?"

It *was* her, Mrs. Russel. That grand beauty, with her chin on her hand, and her elbow on her knee, who sat alone, with her great speculative eyes, seeing beyond you and the crowd behind you, was Rebecca. And as she sat there that morning, all alone, dressed in dove-coloured silk and pearls, there was scarcely a handsomer woman in all old England, from palace to cottage. Your eye was not trained for beauty; you could not see it.

Miss Soper could, to a certain extent. In her business of schoolmistress she had had so much beauty put under her eye that she knew it when she saw it. Mrs. Russel's definition of beauty would have limited itself to "a fresh complexion." Miss Soper had a dim idea of generalising from fact. Jewellers' clerks get a knowledge of what is the prevailing taste in jewellery. An old picture-dealer's clerk will tell you what will sell and what will not. So Soper, in her trade, knew a pretty girl when she saw

one, though in her office of dragon she disliked receiving them. But she knew more. She was well-connected in the trade, and she knew houses who would take an article which was seldom offered to her, and which often, in her way of doing things, gave her great trouble—a very handsome girl. So looking at Rebecca, she said—

“She is wonderfully handsome.”

“Do you think so, my dear?” said Mrs. Russel. “I can’t see it.”

“No one ever supposed so,” said Miss Soper.

“Don’t shove again, dear; pray don’t,” said Mrs. Russel.

“What did I tell you about that girl when we got her forbidden to go out of the lane?” said Miss Soper.

“I forget,” said Mrs. Russel.

As it seemed that Miss Soper had forgotten also, she resumed the discussion at another point.

“Shall we go and speak to her?” said Miss Soper.

“My dear soul,” said the really good though cross Russel. “I think we ought. The poor child is pining over Mr. Hagbut; it would be only kind.”

Was she, Mrs. Russel? No, she was away from you all, with the sounds of the great sea. While she had been sitting there in her dove-coloured silk all alone she had watched your figures till she had tired of them, and had gone to sea once or twice. You were quite out of her thought. She did not want to be naughty, but she could. Why did not you leave her alone?

She could be horribly naughty, and she had the most intense dislike for these two ladies. If you had told her that Mrs. Russel was only a hot-tempered, gossiping scold, who would have given the bed from under her to release the son she had scolded out of doors, she would have laughed at you. If you had told her that that intolerable woman, Miss Soper, was in her way a heroine, and had slaved all her life to keep a ruined family together, and in doing so—in training virtuous women, had done more good than was ever likely to fall to the share of our poor Rebecca, she would have laughed at you again. Their formulas had been rendered hateful to her, and she hated them through their formulas, which had plagued her. She was a very naughty girl, and they made her naughtier.

She was rounding some dim wild cape in a gale of wind, and there were two with her whom she knew and one who always stood perversely behind her. And the one who stood behind her kept saying like a cuckoo, “Not yet. Not yet.” And again like a blackbird, “Not till you’re fit. Not till you’re fit.” And there

suddenly approached to her her deadly enemies, the Russel and the Soper. What reader would trust her temper under such circumstances?

She rose and gave them a sweeping curtsey, and, may I say it, the devil entered into her. It was only a very little one.

"Are you quite well, Miss Turner?" said the fat Russel.

"I am quite well, thank you," said Rebecca. "I had a holiday lately. It has done me much good."

"Indeed! another?" said the Soper, alluding to the terrible escapade to Broadstairs.

"Yes," said Rebecca, looking at her with a look which the Soper had never seen in any of her schoolgirls' faces. "Another. A young gentleman from the sea came and took me out for a holiday, and he took me down the river all the way to Gravesend. And we were together all day."

"Who went with you, my dear?" said Mrs. Russel.

"He did," said Rebecca.

"No one else?"

"What did we want with any one else? He was very handsome and agreeable, and a third would have been one too many. I should like you to be introduced to that young gentleman, Miss Soper. His hair is so beautiful. Little curls all over his head. He sat at my feet the most of the time, and if I had had a pair of scissors, I believe I should have snipped one off."

The allied powers retreated. Says Russel, "That girl will go to the bad."

"Not she," hissed Soper in her ear. "She is just the very one of all others who won't. She is not in my line, I did not have that article in my establishment, but I know enough to know that."

Rebecca said to herself, "It is the only way to treat you people. If kings and priests would not make outrageous pretensions, democracy would die: at least pa says so. Ha! you two, Carry said you were coming."

She sat perfectly still after this, in her old attitude, quite quiet, knowing that they would come to her. The chairs beside her were unoccupied, for the Philistines did not know exactly whether they ought to go near her, and her father made no sign. "Those two," were quickly sitting beside her. She was determined to amuse herself, and in answer to their greetings she replied, without raising her chin from her hand—

"Where is Hetty?"

"She is at home," said Mr. Morley.

"What is she doing?" said Rebecca, without moving.

"She is not doing anything to-day," said young Hartop. "She is getting the duds together. Change of ship, you know."

"Now, Jack," said Mr. Morley. "Mind your promise."

Rebecca, from young Hartop's silence, thought that Morley was angry, but moving her chin from her hand and looking up in his face she saw that his eyebrows were raised, and that the corners of his mouth were down. She also noticed that he looked in his way more handsome than any man she had ever seen. But she had noticed that before.

The next properly arranged wedding you go to, when you have looked at the bridegroom long enough, look at the bride's father. If it is a well-arranged marriage there will be the same light in the eyes of both. This was not a well-arranged wedding, for our poor Rebecca, whom I hope you have forgiven, had rather spoilt it by her wild conduct. Mr. Hagbut had changed rather quickly too; and there was a cloud over it by his mere presence. Mr. Turner, man of the world, knew this, and did not show to advantage; he was haggard and worn, and bent his head.

He had been into the room and out again. She had scarcely noticed him at first, but when he came in a second time, she watched his bowed head and rose to her feet.

I know a young lady of such strange and radiant beauty, that I and my companion always know, when we go to a country gathering, in one instant, whether she is there or not. Rebecca's beauty was not so great as that lady's, I will allow; yet when she rose from between Hartop and Mr. Morley her presence was felt. The babble which was going on in awaiting the bridegroom died into whispers—into silence—as she came softly forward and kissed her father.

"Give me your blessing, father."

Turner raised his head as she bent hers.

"The Lord of Miriam and of Jael bless thee, my daughter. Smite as Jael, then sing as Miriam. Thou art blessed, oh! my daughter."

And so he kissed her, and she went back and sat between Hartop and Mr. Morley again.

"He has forgiven her," whispered Mrs. Russel.

"Hold your tongue," said Miss Soper. "There is something I can't understand about this, and so I don't suppose *you* can."

"Keep close to me, you two," said Rebecca, in a whisper; "I am frightened. Don't leave me, you two."

"Are you ill?" said Hartop, also in a whisper.

"No, I am never ill. But these people frighten me. This house is frightful, and the lane is frightful. You don't know what

this house is. There is poison in it. My father cannot give me his blessing without frightening me. And Carry says there is blood at the foot of the stairs," she added, wildly and hurriedly. "Why should he talk of Jael?"

"I wish Hetty was here," said Hartop, in a low voice.

"Quiet, my child, quiet," said Mr. Morley, laying his hand on her arm; "talk of something else. What shall we talk of?"

"The sea," said Rebecca, herself in an instant; "I want to know about the sea, or about Hetty Morley."

"There is no such person," said Hartop, turning and looking into Rebecca's face.

"No such person!" said Rebecca, aghast; "is she drowned?"

"Not a bit of it," said Hartop, bringing his face close to hers; "Hetty is alive, but she is Hetty Hartop now, for she and I were married by Mr. Morley yesterday morning."

Her dull horror of the old house, and the quaint company, was gone at once by this pretty piece of news. It was something so bright, so human, so—well, so romantic, that a great smile spread over her face as she said—

"No."

"Fact, I assure you. Yesterday morning. You were not to be told, but I saw you were getting low." And, indeed, the tact of this young sailor was very great, for Rebecca was quite roused again and gay.

"You provoking people. I want to see Hetty, and you will tell me nothing of her."

"It wouldn't do here," said Hartop; "they wouldn't stand it."

"But what is she like?" asked Rebecca.

"What is she like?" said the bridegroom. "Why she is like her father; that's about what she is like. You've seen *him*," he growled.

Rebecca turned on Mr. Morley. "She is like you!"

"But younger, you know, and more good-looking," said Mr. Morley, with a bow.

And Rebecca had just settled emphatically in her mind that Hetty was very handsome, when enter the bridegroom.

"Why, that is never him," said Rebecca, suddenly.

It was, though. A man at his best (and a man generally makes the best of himself when he is going to be married), is a very different thing from a man at his worst. Rebecca and Hartop had only known him at his worst, and even Morley, knowing him better than they did, was surprised. "That big, fat, pale-faced man," he thought, "has actually more vitality than I have. I shall last

longer, but if I had been what he has been, I could not have shown such a presence."

A man, we must remember, with sufficient physique for the first or second Life-Guards, who has spent his life in talking religionism to foolish and uneducated women, is very likely to become fat, ill-dressed, and untidy. But put that man on his mettle. Get him rejected by a beautiful girl, and make him bridegroom to another girl, and I fancy you will find some of the old Adam in him. There was a considerable deal of the old Adam in Hagbut that day; so much that he looked a rather noble person.

Rebecca leant back in wonder, and said aloud (for she knew that no one could hear her but Mr. Morley and Hartop; and she did not "mind" them), "I could not have believed it. Why the man is handsome and noble looking."

"Is there any reason why he should *not* look noble?" said Mr. Morley, quietly. "My dear child, that man has done more good in his day than ever you will have the chance of doing, even if you had the power or the will. His formulas displease you; they are purely scriptural, and move the dead bones of the middle class into life. His vulgarity displeases you; that very vulgarity is the key note of his power among the vulgar, who would dislike and possibly resent the ministrations of a scholar and a gentleman, who could not understand their ways of thought, and who would continually keep their inferiority before their eyes, by talking in a dialect more refined than their own. I pray God that when I die I may claim to have done as much good as Hagbut has."

"Yes!" said Rebecca, thinking.

"Yes, indeed," said Morley. "There are those who say that such men as Hagbut vulgarise religion. It is not true, or at best only half true. They find a vulgarised religion among vulgar people, and they preach it, as honestly and as nobly as this man has; and he raises his people by doing so."

"How can he raise them by being vulgar?" asked Rebecca.

"He raises them, in spite of all his vulgarity, to the level of Christianity; and at that point both he and they cease to be vulgar. I daresay that the Covenanters ate with their knives, but they could die like the best gentleman of the lot. While there are vulgar people, you must have vulgar priests. I, being a gentleman myself, know that well. That man Hagbut, whose ways of speech and of action are an offence to me, has brought more souls to Christ than ever I shall bring, with my twopenny refinements. He comes of their own class, and their language is his. Their language is foreign to me, and I cannot imitate it. And that lower middle class is the very one which wants rousing and exciting.

The great use of the Dissenting clergymen is to rouse that class, and to ennoble them. Hagbut can do it. I cannot. I am a useless man compared to him.

"Yet you can bring sailors to chapel, sir," said Hartop, quietly.

"Ah, yes, I can do that," said Mr. Morley, with sudden animation. "Yes, boy, I *can* do that. That was a good thing for you to say. Yes! yes! they come again and again. It is not utterly nothing to keep lads in the faith their mothers taught them through all temptations. You must come down and hear me preach some day, Miss Turner. See, the bride is moving. We must go."

So they went. And Hagbut married Carry; and the Hagbut episode in her little life came to an end.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONFIDENCES.

AND Carry was gone, and Rebecca had to undertake her duties.

"I shall make a fine mess of it at first, pa," she said to her father on the first day, "for I have been most diligently idle all my life. But I will do the best I can. I can't scold and worry, but I will keep the maids in order for all that. *You* shan't want anything, my dear."

"You will do well enough if you care to do it," said Mr. Turner. "I don't want scolding or worrying; I have lost my faith in it. That is what made the mischief between your mother and me."

"Well, dear pa, that is all over and gone. We shall be happy together, you know."

"I don't know. You may be happy, for you have hope before you—the hope of my death. I am a broken man. I wish I was dead."

"I am sure I don't know why, father," said Rebecca, with a heavy heart, and a light tongue; "what nonsense you talk. Is there any man in our connection more honoured than you are? As for the money I am to have at your death, I wish you would leave it to Carry, and then you would not suspect my love."

"You are a foolish girl."

"I think you are a very foolish man," said Rebecca, stoutly; "that prospective money has been the greatest plague of my life; I wish it was in the deep Atlantic. That —— Mr. Hagbut would have left me alone if it had not been for that money."

"You were too good for him," said Turner. "Child, have you ever thought of any one else?"

"As a husband?"

"Yes; as a husband."

"Certainly," said Rebecca; "for a whole week I thought I should have liked *very much* to marry young Hartop. But, here, he has gone and married Hetty, leaving me desolate and disconsolate. There was never any one so shamefully deceived as I have been."

"Do you know Hetty Morley?" said Mr. Turner.

"No, I don't," said Rebecca; "the artful young puss! When I do I will give her a piece of my mind. Young——I mean Mr. Hartop, has used me shamefully. It is all very well for you to laugh, pa, but you wouldn't like it yourself."

"Come here," said Mr. Turner. And Rebecca came and sat at his feet.

"I have been a hard father to you, my child, and I do not know how I have won your love. But I seem to have it. God is very good. He is not what they want to make Him out, is He?"

Rebecca answered her father by stroking his hand and putting it to her lips.

"My head is growing old, girl. I am a broken man; but I will do my duty to the very last. I am not to be trusted. This responsibility about Ducetoy's papers is killing me. I never thought I should have found my truest, kindest friend in you, but it is so. You will stay by me to the end?"

"To the death, father;" she did not want him to get excited, and so she said no more.

"You are a better man than I am, child, and I wander to-night. But, believe me, that Morley's God is the true God—is the true God—and—and not Hagbut's. Where is the little dog?"

"She is here, father," said Rebecca, putting Mab on his lap.

"Pretty little beast; bonny little beast. Bark for us, little one. Defend us. My dear Rebecca, the God who made this little thing was not Hagbut's God, but Morley's."

"There is one—but one God, father," said Rebecca. And she said it because she did not know what to say.

"Yes, but they make two or three. See, girl! Will you promise me one thing?"

"I will do as you tell me," said Rebecca ; "if you will be always as you are now."

"Promise me that you will never join the established church after I am dead."

Rebecca sat silent for a long time. At last she said—

"I don't think that I could promise as much as that, father. I think it extremely improbable, but I will not pledge myself. I tell you honestly that if I were to quit our connection, I should go either to the Moravians or to the Primitive Methodists."

"They are not a very high sect, my child," said Mr. Turner.

"I don't *want* a very high sect," said Rebecca ; "but that is just where it is."

CHAPTER XIX.

DARKER HOURS STILL.

DULL was the old house, duller, alas ! than ever it was, for there was not even old Carry now ; and Mr. Turner left alone in the house with the favourite daughter of his dead wife, began to mope and brood over that miserable old business. It was evident also to Rebecca, that his mind was not by any means what it had been.

She was free to go where she would now, but she never went far out of the lane, except a few times as far as Putney Bridge. She used to slip across sometimes to see Mrs. Spicer or Mrs. Akin, in a quiet neighbourly way, and hear their gossip, give them books, and other little things, doing them high honour. It would have been an evil time for any man who insulted her while Mr. Spicer or Akin were near.

Those two worthies were the very picture of comfort and contentment every Sunday morning, each in his shirt-sleeves and a long pipe in his mouth, as Rebecca took her father to chapel, but one morning she missed them, and thought they had gone for an expedition somewhere : "It is very little pleasure they get," she thought. "We ought not to begrudge it to them." But when they got inside the chapel, who should be sitting near the door but Spicer and Akin in their best clothes. Rebecca flushed up with real pleasure, and when service was over, she made her father stop while she spoke to them.

"I am *so* glad to see you here."

"Yes, miss," replied Akin. "It looked so nice seeing you and the governor going every Sunday, that we thought we'd go. That's about the size of it, miss."

"I *hope* you like it."

"Yes, miss, we likes it well enough," said Jim Akin, "but we don't make much fist on it at fust."

"Ah! you won't find it strange long," said Rebecca. And so they parted.

Her father asked her as they went home under the dull grey sky, if she had asked these men to come to chapel: and she had said, "No, that she had never mentioned it to them," and he said, "I am very glad of that. Whatever you do, don't undertake the responsibility of forcing religion on other people. Let them find it out for themselves——" he was going on to say a great deal more, as it seemed to Rebecca from the tone of his voice, but he checked himself suddenly.

It was dull, miserable, dripping, motionless weather, and she sat day after day utterly alone while her father was away on business; alone save for her little dog. She tried hard to be very good, and as is usually the case when a person tries that, she succeeded. Only she fretted a little that she did not hear from her friends in Limehouse.

Many things in the house-keeping were great puzzles to her, and she used to take them patiently, and lay them at the feet of her beloved old nurse Tibbey, in Leader Street, Chelsea; but it was rather a long way there, so she saw but little of those excellent souls at present.

One day there came a letter which made her cry; it was from Mr. Morley. Jack Hartop and Hetty were off to sea, and Hetty was so hard at work, shifting into her new ship, that it would be quite impossible for her, or Jack either, to get to Walham Green. He added, that as soon as they were gone, he would very likely come and see her himself. She cried a good deal over this letter, but it was not in anger and rebellion. That nightmare, Mr. Hagbut, being removed from his position of possible husband, she rather liked him than otherwise, and was at peace with all the world; and the Limehouse people had done her much good; and she was in one way and another very far from the Rebecca of old times. She cried because she had wanted to see Hetty, and she told her father so, frankly, that night, when he asked her why her eyes were red.

"Why do you want to see her?" he asked.

"I don't know. I am sure she is nice."

"Why?"

"Because those two are so fond of her, and those two are the nicest people I know."

"Miss Hetty Morley," said Mr. Turner, "chose to disgrace herself and ruin her father's connection, by a stupid and rebellious course of action. As Mrs. Hartop she is continuing it. If you walked the earth round, you would not find, in the Dissenting connection, three such sentimental idiots as Morley, his daughter, and Jack Hartop."

"What has Hetty done, pa?"

"Degraded herself; dropped into a low sphere of life, and dragged her fool of a father down with her. Morley may choose to tell you in his own good time, for he is as obstinate as a pig, what she *has* done; but he chooses to keep the secret, and I won't betray him."

"But you like Mr. Morley, pa?"

"Yes. He is a good and a noble man, a pure Christian, and a real gentleman; but he will have to answer to God for his indulgence to that girl."

"But you would listen to him on spiritual matters?"

"Yes, to no man sooner. But he has been a fool in a worldly point of view, by allowing that girl to do as she has done."

And this was all she could get out of her father. And the great mystery about Hetty was no nearer solution than ever.

This was one of the most weary times she had ever had; for even if Carry had been there, she had lost the heart to scold her, and so her sole amusement was gone. She had her cats, and was still kind to them, though her little dog Mab had supplanted them in her affections. She told Mab everything now; and Mab seemed to understand. She could have told her father everything, but there was a reason.

At one time, not long ago, she had believed that there would have been perfect accord between herself and her father. It was not to be. The overwhelming sense of responsibility with regard to Lord Ducetoy's papers were too much for his mind, and it became clouded; and in its clouding there came on a phase of religious doubt, which may be laughed at by doctrinaires, but which in practice, in reality, was, to Rebecca at least, horrible.

If he would have broken out into unbelief and sheer blasphemy at once, she could have stood it better. But he got dreadful silent fits, ending in sharp pointed deductions, the result of an hour's solitary silent argument with himself. He would sit perfectly silent, with his hands occasionally wandering one over the other for an hour, until he nearly drove the silently sewing Rebecca, opposite him, out of her mind; and at last, when the

poor unguided girl, working so hard and so nobly at her duty, was nearly out of her mind through sheer nervousness, he would say, suddenly and sharply—

“If one actually regains consciousness after the dissolution of the body, and if one finds that the whole scheme has been a mistake from beginning to end. How then? One will regret that one had not been a profligate; a man who takes such pleasure as he can find, and discounts his bills on the future state.”

And so on. Which has nothing to do with us, further than this. It was horrible and intolerable to Rebecca. It frightened her. She had rebelled against a certain close form of Nonconformist Christianity, as being narrow, cold, and in her eyes worthless, because it wanted the one element of sentimentalism. There had come to her the stout Nonconformist Morley, who had shown her a form of Dissent, as beautiful and as spiritual as the highest forms of Anglicanism or Romanism, though wanting in the ceremonialisms, which, as the daughter of a Papist mother, she loved in her heart. And now here was her father cutting the ground from under her feet, just as she was feeling for it. *De profundis clamavit*, that is to say, she turned on her father once and said, most emphatically —

“I am sorry you have lost your faith, pa; but I can't see that there is the slightest reason for your undermining mine; I am beginning to believe. Please let me.”

Turner saw what she meant, and uttered no more of his doubts. But he sat there opposite Rebecca, night after night, scowling over his Bible as he turned the leaves, and looking unutterable things. Which did not mend matters much for poor Rebecca—which in fact made them rather worse, for she could never tell what he was thinking of now.

In the foolish old days, before one thought, many of us used to read the account of the prize-fights in *Bell's Life*; and one used to read that Bod So-and-so “was a glutton for punishment.” Now I claim for Rebecca that she was a better “glutton for punishment” than any snake-headed, bright-eyed young man, who ever made a brute of himself in the prize-ring.

Punishment enough she got in these days. Her father fading and growing mad before her eyes. No society; and as it seemed to her, no hope. The responsibility of the enormous amount of valuable heirlooms and papers in the house, thrown on her own shoulders, for her father was as no one, save in his determination to hold by them. No help, no advice, nothing for her but a dull mulish obstinacy; a determination to act honestly as circumstances

should direct. And all the time her father in one of his "girding" moods; accusing her of idleness, and making his case good to her about her dead mother. Punishment enough, poor child. But she took it bravely and nobly.

"Pa," she said, one night, "don't gird at me."

His face had been fixed before, but it relaxed now.

"Have I been girding at you, Rebecca?"

"Yes, pa. Don't, please."

"I won't, dear. I didn't mean to. Tell me when I gird at you, and I will leave off."

CHAPTER XX.

OTHELLO, MOOR OF VENICE.

At last Mr. Morley came. Surely no brown, handsome face, no quiet hazel eyes, no very slightly grizzled head of curling hair, was ever more welcome in a Christian house than were his.

It was in the dreary middle of the day when he came, and Rebecca, who was kneading dough (and making an awful mess of it), uttered a joyful exclamation when she saw him. I think that I have mentioned before that in social matters this odd young lady was rather radical. She certainly behaved on this occasion in a way which would have horrified the better conducted sister Carry. She ran up the stairs and opened the door herself with her hands, nay, with her finely-moulded bare arms all over flour, and she said, "Come in; I thought you must be dead. Tell me about those two."

"Go and wash your hands, and come and talk to me in the parlour," said Mr. Morley, quietly, and Rebecca slid away and did as he told her.

"Now," she said, when she was seated by him on the sofa, "tell me all about Jack and Hetty."

"That will depend on your account of your behaviour," said Mr. Morley. "How have you been behaving?"

"I have been as good as gold."

"Then I shall not tell you one word," said Mr. Morley; "you are in a vain-glorious and self-seeking frame of mind, and I will mortify you by not telling you one single word."

"Well, then, I have been very naughty."

"One of your propositions must be false, and so I shall certainly tell you nothing now."

"Then you are a most disagreeable man, and I hate you—no I don't—don't mind me. I love you very much, Mr. Morley. Only come sometimes and tell me what to do, for really and truly I don't know."

"You have been well brought up, and you ought to know for yourself. At least I mean to leave you to find out. How is your father?"

Rebecca remained perfectly silent, with her chin in her hand for a long time, and Morley sat looking at her steadily, although she did not know it. She sat so long thus that he repeated his question, I very much fear to catch the light in her eye. Rebecca turned to him quickly for one instant, and he had his will. She gave him one kindly glance, and saying, "Wait a little," resumed her old attitude of thought—that of Michael Angelo's Lorenzo de Medici.

Morley waited for her in silence and in patience. "Here," he said to himself, "is a woman who will actually think before she speaks. Here is also a woman who can act, who has acted, on far-seeing, deliberate conviction, careless of present consequences. Are there two Hettys in the world?" He sat and watched her, wondering what would come.

He had a long time to wait before it came, for she did not open her mouth until she had made up her mind. And then she told him everything decisively, and straightforwardly, as one man tells a whole matter to another man who is his friend.

She moved closer to him on the sofa where they sat, so that the two beautiful faces were not very far apart, and so that her eyes could look straight up into his. And there and then she told him everything.

Her wasted, rebellious, furious youth; her secret hankering after Popery—the religion of her mother, he must mind—as promising some sort of rest to her furious heart; the quieting effect that the gentle Primitive Methodists had had on her always; her rage and hatred against Hagbut because he wanted to marry her; the real reason of her wild escapade to Broadstairs; her love for her father; her love for Carry; her love for her little dog; her love for Mr. Spicer and Jim Akin; her love for Jack Hartop; for Hetty, whom she had never seen, and her love for him—Morley. "I assure you, Mr. Morley, that I believe I am a most affectionate person, if I had a fair chance. But people are so cross. I'd get fond of old Russel and old Soper if they would only be civil."

Mr. Morley said, "Quite so."

Then she went on, resuming the Lorenzo de Medici attitude again, and leaving herself and her experience, told him in a plain,

business-like manner, the whole story of her father, and her troubles from beginning to end. "For," she said, "you have got kind, trustworthy eyes, like Mab's, and if one wants to keep out of Bedlam, one must tell some one." And so she told him all about the fearful responsibility her father had undertaken, pointed out to him that her father's action was nearly illegal, being done without the consent of trustees, of whom Sir Gorham Philpott was one.

Here Mr. Morley interrupted her for a moment. "Was Lord Ducetoy married?"

"No; and he would not get married for a month or so, until affairs were in some way square. He was to be married to Miss Egerton of Delamere."

Mr. Morley was satisfied at once, and begged her to proceed.

She went on at once, eagerly, not catching the drift of Morley's last inquiry; for he was so surprised at Turner's singular and chivalrous behaviour that it had entered into his, not generally a suspicious mind, that Turner wished Lord Ducetoy to marry Rebecca. Rebecca, I say, went on, and told him of the clouding of her father's mind; of his religious doubts; of his strange midnight wanderings up and down the old house; of the awful responsibility which weighed on her with regard to him. She told him all; and then, turning her face to his again, asked for his advice.

"It is easily given, Rebecca," he said; "go on as you are going now. Do your duty to him as you are doing it now, and you will not fail. You have a clear, sharp brain, *use it*; and you will do well."

"But I have *done* nothing," said Rebecca.

"What could you do?" said Morley.

Rebecca's chin went in her hand again directly; and after a time she said—

"I don't see, speaking honestly, that I could have done any more than I have. The time for action has not come. And then I am such a fool, you know."

"Are you?"

"They all say so."

"Well, then, of course it is true. About this business, taken as a whole, you can do nothing more than you have done. It is one of those matters on which one cannot decide. Your father is behaving splendidly; but if his religion goes from him in the struggle, your father will die. I will talk to him. You are a good girl; indeed, I always thought you were, do you know;" and Morley laughed.

"That is all very fine," said Rebecca; "but at the same time one would like a little practical advice."

"I'll manage matters for you, my child," said Morley. "I'll shift no responsibility off your shoulders on to mine, but I will make things easier for you. You do your little duty, and you will come to no harm."

"Then you don't think me such a very naughty girl?"

"Well, well! you are behaving well now."

"Am I naughtier than Hetty?"

"You leave Hetty alone; Hetty is no business of yours."

"But Hetty was naughty. What did she do, Mr. Morley?"

"She was exceedingly naughty, and I was very nearly being angry with her; that is what she did."

"Am I never to see Hetty?"

"What on earth do you want to see her for?"

"I don't know," said Rebecca. "I think I should like her. There cannot be much harm about her, or Jack Hartop would not love her as he does. He says that she has been wrecked three times, and that the Queen wrote her a letter. Why was she shipwrecked?"

"Because she shipped on ships which happened to get wrecked."

"Hum!" said Rebecca. "But why did the Queen write to her?"

"Because she did her duty, as you are doing yours now."

"But tell me more," said Rebecca, eagerly. "Let me know something of her, for I love her, and I can't tell why. What did she do that the Queen should have written to her? Tell me."

Dangerous work this. Two noble and enthusiastic souls sitting close to one another, and telling of great and noble deeds. As for Morley, *he* had made up his mind long before. He was determined to marry Rebecca, and Hartop and Hetty knew it. As for Rebecca, she brought her fate on herself. If she had desired her freedom she should not have sat on the sofa beside a very attractive Dissenting minister, and have forced him to tell the tale of his daughter's heroism. All that happened to her was her own fault. But they will do it. Searching among rare old books the other day, I came across a very scarce play called *Othello, or the Moor of Venice*. In that play the Moor actually wins his Venetian beauty by telling travellers' taradiddles of the Sir John Mandeville type. Morley did not do this; he only told the plain truth about his daughter. But the telling of chivalrous adventures is a very successful way of courting. At least, the man Shakspeare thought so.

"I have no objection to tell you what Hetty did on that occasion," said Mr. Morley. "It may show you what a woman may be worth under certain circumstances. She had been up and down the North Devon coast so often that she could tell every headland in the darkest night. Well, one night, working up from Hayle, against a slow eastering wind, and a heavy ebb tide, the wind shifted against the sun, and came from nor'-west a hurricane. The skipper put her head for Cardiff, but that Sirius is the most thundering—I beg a thousand pardons, you must remember that I live among sailors."

"You did not say anything," said Rebecca.

"Well, I was very near doing it," said Morley. "My dear, that *Bride* is the most thundering idiot of a ship you ever saw. With even the N.W. sea, she shipped enough water on board to put out her fires, and there she lay entirely without deck ports to let the water away, trusting to her scuppers, which were choked with deck lumber, close to a lee shore, with the seas getting up from the Atlantic, nothing between you and Charleston, South Carolina, and the skipper utterly uncertain as to where he was. Do you understand this, my dear Rebecca?"

"Not a bit," she said. "You and Hetty must teach me."

"We will," said Morley. "My dear Hetty, finding her cabins flooded and the ship nearly water-logged, with fires out, and stokers and firemen on deck, naturally came on deck herself, bare-headed, with all her glorious beauty, wild in the storm; you know Hetty's beauty—no, by-the-bye, you don't—but it is greater than your own, child. And in the terror of the tempest she asked the skipper where they were.

"And the skipper said: 'I think we have sea-room, Miss Morley; we are off the Bideford river, and we may get anchorage, and ride it out. Can you see to leeward? Is it not so?'

"But Hetty never answered one word. She peered to leeward through the fury of the tempest, and she came back to him with the message of death, quite quietly.

"My dear Captain Jeffries, you are not off the Bideford river at all. Look there over the starboard bow. That black wall is Baggy Point. Think; can it be anything else?"

"And the skipper put his hat on the deck and trampled on it.

"But Hetty said, 'I will go and get my women ready for death, for with this set of the tide, we shall be on the Morte Stone in ten minutes. Alas! I wish this was untrue.' And the skipper said, 'Is there nothing to be done?' And Hetty said, 'Yes. Make sail on her and put her ashore at Wollacombe.' 'With

rising tide ? ' said the skipper. ' It is better than Morte Stone,' said Hetty.

" And he did it, my dear Rebecca. He made sail on her and put her helm up. And she burst heavily on shore, with the rising tide behind her, and the rapidly accumulating sea following her and getting more furious each moment.

" It was a dim, dark winter's night, my dear, and there was no help to be had. One by one the sailors leaped into the long surf, and some were drowned, and some escaped. Hetty got her women into the forecastle, for the ship had gone stem on, and at last no one was left but the women and the skipper.

" The skipper was doubtful about the ship lasting out the tide, but Hetty pointed out to him, that she, although a *beast*, was strongly built. To the women under her care she pointed out the fact, that in three hours they would walk on shore. And as she was telling them this the ship, by the rising of the tide, shifted broadside on, with a sickening, thumping lurch, and the sea, which hitherto had only been beating over the poop, burst in its rising anger over the whole ship.

" And all the women, young and old, huddled round my beautiful daughter, crying to her to save them. And she, believing that the end had actually come, quieted them by prayer."

A pause.

" You say they were saved ? Oh yes ! they were saved. The captain and the women walked ashore the next morning and went to Ilfracombe. But the Queen wrote to Hetty, and that is what she wrote about."

Dangerous talk this, or the rare play of *Othello* errs.

Mr. Morley came very often indeed now, and his gentle, kindly ministrations had some good effect on Mr. Turner. Morley took this line with him : that he had devoted his life to what he thought the right, and that if he had erred it was only in searching after a nearly impossible excellence. This was in the main true, and it comforted Turner exceedingly. The effect on Turner was not so satisfactory as Mr. Morley could have desired. He suddenly developed a vain-glorious, boastful mood, and would talk by the hour to Rebecca in particular, on his virtuous and blameless life ; would compare his life to the lives of all the other men he knew, very much to his own advantage. In fact, the poor man's brain was upset by anxiety, and he had got into that frame of thought, which consists in persistently stating one's case against destiny, proceeds into a perpetual contemplation of self, and ends in Bedlam. Morley saw this after a time, and counteracted it as

well as he was able. On the whole, however, he did Turner much good, and made life easier for Rebecca.

CHAPTER XXI.

A SUDDEN SURPRISE.

ONE Saturday night her father was in a very silent, thoughtful mood, and would not speak at all, but sat brooding, and now and then would kneel down and pray; to poor Rebecca's great discomfort. How many bitter tears she shed that night, who can tell? She saw that he was not angry with her, for even when he sat by the half-hour together, looking steadily at her, his look was not unkind. This little fact saved her from hysterics, for, to an exceedingly sensitive nature like hers, the fact of having a stern old man, sitting perfectly silent before her, hour after hour, and staring at her with intervals of prayer, was nearly too much. She was relieved when he took his candle and prepared to go to bed.

"Rebecca," he said, "I desire that you will be ready for Mr. Morley to-morrow morning by the first boat."

"What does he want with me?"

"I do not know; but you will have the goodness to go with him. Good-night;" and he went.

It would be very difficult to say what Rebecca's thoughts were that night. They were, one would fancy, not very profound. She had tact enough to see that Mr. Morley would, most probably, ask her no question requiring any immediate answer; yet he might. Long before morning dawned she had thought it all through, and had come to the resolution that if on this occasion, or on any other, Mr. Morley chose to put a certain question to her, that he would have a most decided and emphatic answer; an answer which would prevent his ever repeating his question. "For we do love him, Mab, don't we?" she said, to her little dog. "The only question is, what does he think of us?"

She had breakfast ready for him, and was nicely dressed when he came. "Well, Mr. Morley," she said, "and so I am to have a Sunday out with you? If you are pleased, I am sure I am. This is very kind and considerate of you, indeed. Where are we going?"

"I was going to ask you to come down to Limehouse with me."

"I am dressed, ready to go where you will. Now we will start, or you will be late for your service."

Morley rose and leant against the chimney-piece, and Rebecca stood before him. The man had resolved the night before to examine her character more closely, in times of trial, for another six months. He had resolved that he would see her under every form of temptation before he committed himself irrevocably; he had determined that he would see how far he could mould her character—had made a hundred priggish resolutions. But as she stood before him at that moment, she looked so grand, so noble, and withal so good, that his resolutions all went to the wind; and, like a true man as he was, he spoke his mind.

"Rebecca, child, I love you more than all the world besides."

She only flushed up and stood quite still. She was as utterly unprepared for this as he was himself. She hardly thought it would come at all; still less on this day; still less at the beginning. But these accidents happen, and Rebecca, although prepared with her answer, could not give it from sheer surprise.

"Are you angry with me? Is there another?" he said; and she quickly found her tongue—"Oh! no, no! no other. Please try to love me, Mr. Morley, and I will do my very best."

And so they kissed one another and jogged out to the steam-boat arm-in-arm, with no further words which would assist the telling of this story; and it was all over and done, for ever and ever, a great deal sooner than either of them dreamt of. And men of the world have informed me that this is frequently the case. "If a man and a woman," said one of them sententially, "have made up their minds to make fools of themselves, they no more know at what particular time they will do it, any more than you or I do. They, however, always do it before they mean to."

They jogged out arm-in-arm down the lane in the most sedate manner conceivable. But you cannot keep that sort of thing quiet; it will show itself. Mr. Spicer and Mr. Akin were taking the refreshment of shag tobacco, out of the style of pipe which they called "long churchwardens," when Mr. Morley and Rebecca passed. They saw what had happened directly. Mr. Akin said—

"She's took him."

Mr. Spicer said, "He has got her, hard and fast."

"He is a Methody, ain't he?" said Mr. Akin.

"Oh!" said Mr. Spicer, "but he is a sailor Methody. Why that man," he went on, pointing after the disappearing Mr. Morley with his pipe-stem, "has been a bursted up, with shipwrecks, and earthquakes, and gales of wind, more than any skipper

as sails upon the sea. He has got a good 'un, and she has got a good 'un. There is her little dog a-coming out, Jim, a-trying to foller; send her back. Hish back, little dog. Hish back, little pretty pet."

But Jim Akin, having secured Mab, with that intense love of a highly bred dog which seems almost ingrained in the Londoner's nature, possessed himself of Mab's person, and made her take breakfast on a chair among his children. Mab, as great a radical as her mistress, enjoyed this extremely, and was in fact not taken back till just before chapel time; by which time our two friends were landing far down the river.

The steamer was nearly empty, for it was very early, and they sat alone and talked.

"When did you think of this first, my beloved?" said Morley.

"Only very lately. I am utterly taken by surprise."

"And I also. I never dreamt of speaking so soon. My own, I have no home to offer you. I am bound for the sea."

"And I must stay by father," she said. "So that happens well."

"Then will you wait, Rebecca?"

"Wait for what?"

"To be married."

"Of course I will wait any time. I have got your heart; I care for nothing more."

"Now I am going to say something which will offend you," said Mr. Morley.

"I think not," said Rebecca, "but say it."

"All this has been talked over time after time, between Hetty, Jack Hartop, and I."

"No, really. Well, I am very glad of that. Does Hetty think she will like me, dear?"

"You shall find out that for yourself."

"I am content. Alfred, this is the first day I have ever felt peace in my whole life. When may I know Hetty?"

"When she comes back from America, perhaps."

"Only 'perhaps.' Are you going to America, Alfred?"

"I am going farther than what one generally calls America. I have failed here to a certain extent. I am only popular among sailors, and sailors come and go; and the regular connection at Limehouse dislike me for preaching pure moralisms, and for consorting with the men of the establishment. They are right. But I am a scholar and a gentleman, and it is a sore temptation for me to mix with the men of the establishment, who are, some of them, scholars and gentlemen. And as for preaching moralisms, what

can one preach else, when the heart is sick ? And, again, Hetty, my darling Hetty, is a standing scandal to a certain set, the rich set, down there ; and so I am going abroad ; and I have no home to give you."

"But," said Rebecca, "if you have power among the sailors, they should keep you."

"Well, you see, your brother-in-law, Hagbut, has gone so terribly against Hetty. And he is all-powerful there."

"I will ask no more about Hetty," said Rebecca, laughing, "because I shan't be told. But all Dissenters are not so narrow as these."

"Bless you, no. It is only our little connection, fighting for sheer existence, which is so narrow. Any one of the larger sects would welcome me, ay, and Hetty with me."

"And you could not join them ?"

"No," said Morley. "Theoretically our people are the only pure Christians. Practically, from ignorance, vanity, and stupidity, we are the weakest of all sects. But I am no turncoat."

"Where thou goest I will go. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God," murmured Rebecca ; and so they went on their Sabbath-day's journey,

"Until the forward creeping tides
Began to foam and they to draw,
From deep to deep to where they saw
The great ships lift their shining sides."

And Mr. Morley said, "This is Limehouse. Do you think you shall like it ?"

"I'll see," said Rebecca, as they went on shore.

He was very anxious to know, for he had his plans ; but he did not press her, but waited anxiously, for Limehouse is not at all an attractive place. Rebecca's first impressions of it were, that it was very dirty ; that it smelt of tar and coals ; that the ladies of Limehouse did not do their hair at their first toilet, or levee, and that they stood in the middle of the street, with their arms crossed, and stopped talking to stare at her. That there were too many bare-armed ladies leaning out of upper windows, who talked to one another across the street, and had the same disconcerting habit of being perfectly and suddenly dumb, as she and Mr. Morley went by. Likewise the gentlemen, although evidently sailors, were by no means sailors of the Hartop type, being far less deferential and far more ostentatious in the admiration of her beauty than was at all desirable ; and, moreover, she could not disguise from herself that but a few of these gentlemen were

exactly sober, though only one was drunk : a Norwegian skipper, a short, stout man, with a great blonde curling beard down over his broad chest, who had been making a night of it, and was bent on making a day of it, but who was being taken to his ship by a select committee or caucus of experienced toppers, and whose reiterated argument was that his ship lay off the back door of every public-house which he passed. This was strange, and not very agreeable, to Rebecca, and she still withheld her opinion.

But, when they went further, she began to alter her opinion, and, in fact, changed it altogether.

On the edge of the brimming river they came on a quiet, peaceful row of houses. These houses partly faced the river one way, and on the other a dock, in which ships, small ones it is true, but still real ships which had fought the great ocean, lay with their yard-arms against the windows of the houses.

They came along this dock in approaching the river, and Rebecca looked down on the decks of the ships, and began wondering how those dull inert masses must look at the mercy of all the fury of wind and sea combined against them. There was no sign of the great sea struggle on them now ; only a waste of coiled ropes on deck, and cobweb-like rigging aloft. On one of them was a boy, a coaly boy, in a blue jersey. He, in the surrounding silence and peace, was remarkable. On board another was another boy (washed, this one), who played with the skipper's dog : this boy was an event ; on another was the skipper's boy climbing up a high ladder to shore with the Sunday's dinner of neck of mutton, with potatoes under it, and a solitary onion atop, balanced on his head, going to the baker's, while, from below, the skipper's wife, baby on arm, watched him breathlessly.

"I shall like this place very much indeed," she said, emphatically and suddenly.

"That is well," said Morley.

"Do you *know* these people ? " asked Rebecca.

Morley stood still until the boy with the potatoes and mutton had effected his dangerous landing on that iron-bound coast, and continued to look down on to the deck of the ship. After a time the skipper's wife's eye, being diverted from the very dangerous landing of that bold young mariner the apprentice, rested on Mr. Morley. Whereupon she danced the baby, and "hailed" Mr. Morley in that peculiar yell with which the wives of coasting skippers hail the wives of other coasting skippers, their gossips, on the high sea. C in alto staccato, I suppose, not being musical myself : notes inaudible to the male ear on the waste of waters, but perfectly audible in dock to a priest as well used to sailors'

wives as Mr. Morley. While Rebecca was reading on the stern of the vessel, *Jane*, Ilfracombe, she heard the following dialogue.

"My dear, tender heart, how be ye?"

"All well here, Mrs. Camp?"

"He has a-gone to chapel, my dear," said Mrs. Camp, "and he's a-going to stay. So nice and kind he is. And I'm coming if the boy is back in time; but I can't leave the ship."

"Listen to me," said Morley, in a strangely emphatic voice. "Have you any fire on board?"

"No," said Mrs. Camp, coming close under him, and speaking eagerly.

"Then, if the boy don't come back, leave the ship and come and communicate. Remember it may be the last chance either of you will have to communicate together for ever. Come and kneel with him. There will be an empty place in his heart some day, maybe, if you do not."

The woman said "Wait," and went into the cabin, and in a moment had reappeared with a bonnet on, not clean, and a grey shawl over her shoulders (for these people were not rich), and her baby on her arm. "Now," she said, "minister, I am ready. God bless you for pointing it out."

And they three walked away together. And Rebecca took all these things, and hid them in her heart.

Now baby had occurred as a difficulty to Rebecca, but Mrs. Camp had provided for baby, and was going to leave him on the way with one Mrs. Tryon, widow of a deceased warrant officer, R.N., who lived on his pension, and on the letting of lodgings to Dissenting skippers. She was the most terrible tartar in that peaceful waterside community, and the most difficult to manage. "No one," said the dwellers in Pilot Terrace, "could get to the windward of Mrs. Tryon, save Mr. Morley and a sailor's wife in distress."

Now it so happened, in the everlasting fitness of things, that Captain Moriarty, of Waterford, a Papist, had run his schooner, the *Ninety-Eight*, in on the tide opposite her house, and had then incontinently gone ashore and amused himself. And that schooner, finding herself deserted by the tide, with no hawsers, laid out to larboard, had, in an idiotic and beery way, heeled over, and poked her foretopsail-yard through Mrs. Tryon's best parlour window, to the destruction of property. If it had been a Protestant ship she would not have cared; but a Papist ship—the *Ninety-eight* (she was old enough to remember Hoche) was too much. The damage to property was small; but if a staunch Dissenting Protestant

woman's windows were to be broken by the yard-arm of a Papist ship, why then——So she had laid in wait for Captain Moriarty.

Captain Moriarty had kept away like a good sailor and a dexterous Irishman, till he supposed she had started for chapel. But it was no good. As Mr. Morley and Rebecca came up they were hard at it. Both Mr. Moriarty and Mrs. Tryon were sincerely religious in their very various ways; and Mrs. Tryon, knowing this well, exercised him principally on religious grounds, until he was half crazy with anger.

"That is what the old fool at Rome tells you to do, is it? To break into widows' houses with your foretopsail-yard, and for a pretence make long prayers. Oh, yours is a precious religion, yours is."

"You insult my religion, Mrs. Tryon," said the Irishman; "I never insulted yours. It was an accident, and I am very sorry."

"*Accident*," said Mrs. Tryon. "Why, if my poor man that is gone had come home the worse for drink, and had moored his ship as you had moored yours, me and my gal would have gone out in the dead of the darkest night, and have taken the hawsers to larboard ourselves. Bah!"

By this moment our party had arrived, and had heard what had been said. There was no need for any interference on the part of Mr. Morley, for Mrs. Camp stepped up to Mrs. Tryon with baby, and said—

"My dear, mind baby for me. I want to go to chapel with Mr. Morley, and take sacrament with my old man. For we are going to the old Cameroons, on the West Coast, and we shall never come back no more, I doubt."

Hard-featured Mrs. Tryon flushed up. "Here, Keziah," she said to her maid, "take this baby; I am going to chapel. Moriarty, don't mind my tongue, for you are a good man; mind your larboard hawsers."

And so they all went together. And Rebecca said, as they went, "I think I shall like this place very much indeed."

When they came out from chapel there was a brimming flood tide under a bright sun, with the ships passing upwards under a good brisk wind from the free happy sea beyond.

"How far is it to the sea, Alfred?" asked Rebecca, in a whisper, for the congregation was still round them.

"Fifty miles."

"We shall sail on it together one day, sha'n't we, with Hetty and Hartop?"

"I hope so," said Mr. Morley, quietly; "but much must happen first. I must provide a home."

"Yes. I do not mean that," said Rebecca; "I was only thinking of your sermon. Why did you take such a text on such a happy day as this, and preach only of the cruelty of the sea? Such a wild, strange text—'The burden of the desert of the sea.'"

"I only wished to check your fanciful love for it, Rebecca. A day will come when you will not love it as well as you do now."

And Rebecca said only, "Well, the present is with us, and I am very happy."

"I want to ask you, Rebecca, if you have any objection to my telling what has happened between us two to a few intimate friends?"

"I have none at all, Alfred, if you think it right. I am very proud of it, I assure you."

I, for my part, don't think that there was much necessity for any announcement at all. The whole congregation might run and read, and in fact did so. When they saw their very handsome and eminently marriageable minister with a beautiful young lady on his arm, to whom he talked in whispers, they formed their own conclusions, and generally "overhauled" her (we are in a nautical neighbourhood) at their one o'clock dinner, some saying she was too fine for him, but the most of them thinking that she would do, but that her beauty put them too strongly in mind of that poor Mrs. Hartop; they hoped that he might have better luck with his wife than he had had with his daughter, but generally acquiesced in what did not in the least concern them, and wished their good minister well. Two young ladies seceded for a week or so, and met one another at various chapels in the neighbourhood for a few Sundays; but even they got over it in time. The "minister's wooing" was a patent thing to all.

But here were the minister and his sweetheart (we have no better word than that dear old English one, except that abominable French one, *fiancée* !) on the breezy quay, with all the congregation gone, except a very few, dreaming and whispering. They were aroused by the emphatic voice of Mrs. Tryon, a woman given to management from her youth upwards, who said—

"Where do you take your dinner to-day, minister?"

"Dear me!" said Mr. Morley, with a start. "I had not thought about that."

"No one ever believed that you had," said Mrs. Tryon. "But here are Captain and Mrs. Camp making an extraordinary proposal."

And, indeed, there was no one on the wharf but Mrs. Tryon, and Mr. and Mrs. Camp, when Mr. Morley turned round to speak to them.

"My dear friends," he said, "I want to tell you something. This young lady has promised to be my wife."

"So I should have supposed," said Mrs. Tryon, the irrepressible. "And a lucky woman too, if she only knows it. Well, my dear, I wish you all joy and happiness. There's no such good husbands in the world as sailors, my dear. And *he* is a sailor, true blue, every inch of him. But what do you say to this ridiculous proposal of Captain and Mrs. Camp?"

Captain Camp stood meekly behind his wife and pushed her forward, prompting her in whispers from behind his hand; and Mrs. Camp did the talking.

"Mr. Morley, me and my old man thought, that you being a real sailor, and having made no arrangements for dinner, and Mrs. Tryon's windows being broke in——"

"By the yard-arm of a Papist foretopsail schooner," interposed Mrs. Tryon, with emphasis.

"Quite so, thank you," said Mrs. Camp, turning to Mrs. Tryon gratefully, as if from the stores of Mrs. Tryon's wisdom she had been assisted with an additional argument which had previously escaped her. "Mrs. Tryon's house being broke into by Captain Moriarty, a dear loved friend, I am sure, but incautious: we thought that perhaps—seeing that we're for the Cameroons, and might never come back—that you would have your dinner aboard. But the young lady. Miss, I humbly wish you every joy, but I doubt it wouldn't do for you, Miss."

"Please let me go, Alfred. Do let me go," said Rebecca, eagerly. Whereupon Captain Camp came forward, and Rebecca looked at him.

A splendid young sailor, truly, but not of the Hartop type. Very blonde, with a golden beard, cool, deliberate, but wanting vitality; a man who is apt to knock under on a bad coast, an anxious man, who kills himself by worrying about his responsibilities, when coarser natures, often culpably careless, lose their ships and make such a good sailor-like show before the Board, that they keep their certificates, while men like Captain Camp have theirs suspended. This young man said to them very quietly—

"If it was possible, Mr. Morley, that you could dine with us, it would give us great pleasure. If this lady is to be a true wife to you, and if you are the same man as ever, she will fare rougher than she will to-day. Our last voyage was to Levant, Miss, and

we can give you pretty and delicate things to eat, which you could scarcely buy in shops."

"Please let me go, Alfred!"

"My dear, I am not preventing you. I should like you to go. Only I thought——"

"Never mind what you thought. I am very hungry, and Mrs. Camp's mutton must be on its way home, so we had better get on board ship as soon as possible."

"You will do, my dear," said Mrs. Tryon. "Camp, you had better start your boy up to my place for some knives and forks and things. You shall have my place with your back against the mizen-mast."

"Are you coming?" said Rebecca, as they walked. "I am glad of that."

"Are you, my dear? Well, that is good hearing, for it is few that like me. As for coming, I make it a rule never to dine ashore on Sundays——Rabbit the man, he will never be quiet in his grave till he has had my house down."

This last exclamation was tortured out of her as they rounded the corner and had come in sight of her own house, and the reason of it was this, the schooner *Ninety-eight* had righted with the rising tide, and in so righting herself, pulled away the whole of Mrs. Tryon's verandah. It was really a serious disaster in a small way, and Mrs. Camp dreaded a terrible storm. She took Mrs. Tryon the terrible by the arm, and said—

"Don't be angry with him, dear; he is only an Irishman. Think where we have been together to-day, and don't be angry with him, he is such a good fellow."

"I won't be angry with him, my dear," said Mrs. Tryon. "But I will have it out of his owners if there is a law in the land."

"And then the Board will stop his certificate," said Mrs. Camp. "Don't'ee say anything, don't'ee. He was so kind to us, when my man got his ship ashore at Fayal. Don't'ee say anything. Minister, ask her not to quarrel with him."

"I will take no steps at all," said Mrs. Tryon, "further than asking him to moor his ship opposite some other widow's house. But how has he managed to do it? My old man used to say, when talking of gunnery, that the angle of incidence was equal to the angle of reflection. So I should have supposed that when he had once poked his yard-arm through my window, he could have taken it out again, without pulling half the wall down. I see, this is your Irish seamanship."

Captain Moriarty was straight in their way, and it was unavoid-

able that there should be an interchange of broadsides. They were all a little nervous, as the frigate Tryon ranged alongside the frigate Moriarty. Moriarty prepared fire.

Mrs. Tryon delivered her broadside and passed on, leaving Moriarty in a state of collapse.

"Seas and tidal waters," she said, "are free to all nations, in times of peace. At the same time, Captain Moriarty, the next time it pleases you to knock a Protestant widow's house about her ears, I would trouble you to remember, that it is better seamanship, according to English Protestant rights, to let a ship right as she went over, and not to alter her angle by useless hawsers. Likewise, if you had let go your larboard tacks and sheets, your yard-arm would have come out of my parlour without carrying away the verandah. Whereas, there they are all taut now to shame you, as taut as any standing rigging. Have you *navigated* Mrs. Camp's baby to death, or has it escaped?"

No, Mrs. Camp's baby was waiting for them opposite Captain Camp's ship. Keziah had made it ill with ipecacuanha lozenges, but babies generally are ill, as far as I have ever observed, and so it did not much matter. Not only the baby was here, but the boy, arriving from the baker's, with the mutton on his head, and going across the ladder (for it was now high tide) before them, without apology, feeling himself master of the situation. In less than three minutes Rebecca found herself, with her back to the mizen-mast, in a rather small cabin, eating baked mutton and potatoes, and liking it too.

"I hope you like your dinner, Miss Turner?" said Mrs. Camp, anxiously.

"I like it very much," said Rebecca. "And I like the place I eat it in, and I like the people I eat it with."

"So *you* can make *your* mind easy, Mrs. Camp," struck in Mrs. Tryon. And to Rebecca, "I knew you were one of us, my dear, the first moment I set eyes on you."

"I'll do my best," said Rebecca. "If people will be kind to me, I will do anything. But I am foolish. If any one is unkind to me, I will sit moping and dull, without any power of action, for days and days."

"That's bad," said Mrs. Tryon; "but it is better than flying out and saying things you never meant, and which you can't recall. If a man don't love a woman, her hard words are nothing. If he does, her words mean more than she thought, and he wants time to forget them, and don't always do that. And a man's hard words to a woman are worse, because a woman can't ship for a

voyage as a man can, and come home like a bridegroom. As for me, I only speak of what I have seen in others, for I have had no experience myself."

"You were married a long time, Mrs. Tryon?" said Rebecca.

"Yes, but me and my old man never had words. We both had tempers, and so knowing that, we kept them. And he was a good husband to me; and the parting was bitter. With the Sacrament in my mouth, I should not bear ill-will; but it was that African squadron killed him, and so I bear ill-will to the Cameroons. It didn't much matter. Our minister has assurance that we shall meet again. And then all doubts will be cleared up, and old love revived (as if it wanted reviving), and we shall go on hand in hand through eternity. Therefore, Miss Turner, what does such a trifling parting as ours matter?"

"Then we shall meet our loved ones again?" said Rebecca.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Tryon: "unless the Book lies, 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.' I think that finishes the argument, Miss, if there were any. Piff."

The gentle Mrs. Camp changed the conversation, by arriving after a short absence with her husband, laden with quaint boxes and quainter bottles, the spoils of the East.

"We sailed to Levant last voyage, Miss," she said, "and we brought these things home, for friends. And if Mr. Morley and his sweetheart (I know no better word, Miss Turner) are not friends, who are? Here are figs from Syra, better than you can buy, and here are the little grapes from Xante (you call them currants), which I laid in sugar by my own hand, just before baby was born. You don't take wine, I doubt; but take a little to-day, for our sakes; this is some that my old man bought at St. Lucaz—Spanish wine, strong, but very good. Do be hospitable, my dear young lady, with a Devonshire woman, and drink a little drop of wine with us."

Rebecca consented most willingly, and indeed the wine was admirable wine like port, a wine not got in this country.

"You find this cabin close, now," said Mrs. Camp, as soon as the boy, who had waited perfectly, as he waited from goodwill, had been sent to his dinner, and baby was established on his throne. "You would feel baked in such a little cabin as this."

"It is the nicest place I have ever been in," said Rebecca. "I suppose it is different in a gale of wind at sea?"

"Ah!" said Mrs. Camp. "I have been through it all more than once, with the old man, in this cabin. This ain't our first baby, Miss Turner. Our first was drowned down there, under

that locker, behind you, when I lay drowned, and nigh dead on this very place, with my head cut open."

"Well, we don't want to hear about that," said Mrs. Tryon. "Sailors' wives have their trials, and you have had yours. Similarly I have had mine. Similarly Miss Turner will have hers. Why, my boy was eighteen when he sailed for the West Coast, and never came home again. Therefore, what are your troubles to mine?"

"That is very true, Mrs. Tryon," said the humble Mrs. Camp; "and I am wicked to think of my little troubles in any way. But I think I am sentimental to day; and that is what a sailor's wife should never be. I suppose it is because I went to Sacramento with the old man for the last time."

"What do you mean by the last time?" said Mrs. Tryon, sternly.

"I didn't mean any harm," said Mrs. Camp. "But we are going to the West Coast."

"Better folks than you have been to the West Coast, and come back again," said Mrs. Tryon. "Don't cry out before you are hurt. The *Cleopatra* has only lost ten hands in eighteen months. Of course, if you, in your lazy, merchant way, choose to moor in a mango swamp, you will all die. Veer out a couple of cables, and lie well off shore, out of the land fog, as Her Majesty's ships do, and you will come to no harm at all. If you sneak into fever holds, you will have fever. Mr. Morley, I am going to chapel."

Mr. Morley, who had been having a quiet conversation at the end of the table with Mr. Camp, asked Rebecca if she was inclined to go; but told Mrs. Camp that he was not going to chapel, but had provided for his duty.

"Then why not stay longer with us" said Captain Camp. "We shall never see you again."

"She and I have much to speak of, as you may understand," said Mr. Morley. "I only said the words to her this morning."

"You have a prize," said Captain Camp.

"Yes, indeed," said Morley. "I have known her, and watched her for long."

"What does Hetty think of her?" said Captain Camp.

"She has never seen her; and Rebecca knows nothing of Hetty. Jack Hartop is the only one of our local connection who has ever seen her."

"But, my dear minister, is this concealment wise?"

"Hagbut hates Hetty so; and he is all-powerful."

"That is true. Well, this Rebecca is a tramp, at all events. Good-bye."

And Mr. Morley and Rebecca crossed the ladder, and stood again on the wharf. The afternoon had become wild and rainy, and the tide was going down; and Mr. Moriarty's ship's main-topsail-yard was (through Mr. Moriarty's careless arrangement of hawsers) rapidly approaching Mrs. Tryon's bedroom window. Mrs. Tryon had resigned herself to this fresh desecration of her hearth-stone, and gone to chapel: the Camps had got ready for a sailor's dawdle among the ships. But our two set their heads westward, knowing that their end for the present was Walham Green.

"Could you get on with such people as those, Rebecca?" said her. "If I was long away, could you live with them?"

"I could live and die with them," said Rebecca. "Those people are alive, ours are dead. Is the sea so cruel as they tell us, dear?"

"The sea is very cruel. The world is cruel, also. Come, *you* have seen that."

"I shall have to wait for you?"

"Yes."

"I wish I could wait for you there. Mrs. Tryon is better than Miss Soper; and I do so dearly like those Camps."

"You will hardly see much of them," said Mr. Morley; "they are bound on a long voyage."

Ay, indeed, they were. An old, old story, read in the papers every day; but a wearisome one to tell, from sheer reiteration. The Camps sailed away on ebb tide, a week after this, with their baby, and their apprentice, and five hands all told. And they sailed westward, before the east wind of late March; and they sailed away into the golden west of early spring, and nothing was ever heard of them from that day to this. Nothing will ever be heard of them until the sea gives up her dead. They had taken the Sacrament together for the last time on earth.

To Rebecca they had been like a bright gleam of sunshine, on the happiest, most April-like day of her whole life. In the times soon to come, when she was all alone, watching a dying life, behind windows which quivered and rattled in the furious blast, she would hear the cry of sailors mooring their ship. And she, in that vague, foolish superstition, of which those who have watched long by the beds of the dying can tell you, would slip down silently, saying, "That is Camp's ship." But it never was Camp's ship, and it never will be; for Camp's ship, wife, baby, boy, and all her crew, are at the bottom of the blue, wandering sea.

CHAPTER XXII.

RUIN.

REBECCA got home soon after afternoon chapel, and Mr. Morley left her at the door. She was very quiet and cool over what had happened, not seeing any great reason why she should be otherwise. Mr. Morley had bidden her tell her father at once, and she went upstairs to do so very quietly.

He was sitting alone with the little dog on his knee, reading the "Pilgrim's Progress." His mind was perfectly quiet and unclouded this day, and he brightened up when he saw his handsome daughter before him. The little dog wriggled and scolded in his lap to get at her, and Mr. Turner put her down and smiled when she ran to Rebecca.

"My dear father, I hope you have not been dull?"

"No, daughter. I have been very happy. I was at the Communion with you in spirit; and I was glad to think that you were in pleasant goodly company. Come and tell me where you have been."

"Please, pa," said Rebecca, kneeling at his feet, "I want to tell you something very particular indeed. Mr. Morley has asked me to marry him, and I have said that I would, if you would let me. And you will let me, won't you?"

"I am very glad of this," said Mr. Turner; "this is the only wish I had in this world, I think. I am very glad, my dear; God bless you. Try to be worthy of him."

"I will, father, indeed."

"I doubt you will be very poor," said Mr. Turner, as soon as Rebecca was seated. "You will have about £150 a year—he will never have anything to speak of. He is not a drawing man, to any except the poor. But I don't see why you should not be happy. I'll tie your money up and you shall have it when you marry. Four thousand pounds is all I can guarantee you. There may be a little more, but I can't tell. Hagbut is a near man."

"I was not thinking of money, father," said Rebecca.

"It would be extremely indecent if you were," said Mr. Turner: "but I was. I have secured you from actual poverty, and Hagbut is hard and near; and I gave my word to certain things with regard to Carry, or we should have had her on our hands for ever and a day; and my word is as good as my bond. Beyond this four thousand pounds I can only give you Hobson

Bay scrip, which may be worth something or nothing, but which has escaped that man's ferret eyes. You won't starve, Rebecca."

"Pa, don't talk about money to-day."

"Well, I won't. Give me my tea."

She soon did that, and made him comfortable before the fire. "Come," he said, "don't take all the good things to yourself; give me the little dog," and Mab, a black peaked nose, and hair, was handed reluctantly to him by Rebecca.

Mab had a great idea of Mr. Turner, considering him in the light of an idol or fetish, requiring continual propitiation and flattery. So she scuffled over his waistcoat, licked his face, and only desisted from her cultus of him when he gave her a little slap, after which she was quiet. Rebecca thought that she had seen the same sort of thing before in certain chapels; and indeed one may see the same in certain churches also.

"Pa," she said, when Mab was quiet, "tell me all about the Establishment."

"I don't know much about it. Is he going to join it?"

"Lor, no. He would die sooner. Only I wanted to know."

"Well, the Establishment is the gentleman's church. Never mind the Establishment. You listen to me, girl, and never you mind the Established Church."

"I was only talking to amuse you, sir; and I will trouble you to remember that I have taken brevet rank, that I am engaged to Mr. Morley. So no airs."

They were but silly words, but they were said so prettily that Turner himself laughed for a moment. "Come, girl," he said, "you are happy to-day, and indeed, old Rebecca, I am happy in your happiness. I assure you that I am; but I am in trouble after trouble. Are you going to him at once, for I am sore bestead, and I want you at home?"

"My dear father, he has asked me to wait a very long time, and I have told him that I could not leave you, and that *he* must wait a very long time."

"That is good," said Mr. Turner; "that is very good. Listen carefully to me, for my mind is unclouded to-night, and it may be clouded again to-morrow; for I have had a hard life of it, child. I have never had a day's holiday; and your mother—well, never mind her, poor dear, you have made it square between us—and my head goes at times; listen now, and be mute."

Rebecca listened intently.

"You have heard of the great house of Philpott & Co. (limited, in all ways, save an unlimited smash)."

Rebecca nodded.

"Well, they are hopelessly smashed for two millions and a half of money. They have been bankrupt for a long while; and their last effort was to get our cousin Ducetoy's title deeds, and lease money on them, by which he would have been brought into the bankruptcy. His father had meddled and muddled with them in the old times, before they were a company; and they thought they could connect him with the company. I have saved him—utterly illegally."

"But he is nothing to us."

"He was your mother's cousin, and I owe her reparation," he said, gloomily; "I have papers which would tell one way, I don't say which. But they dare not ask for them."

"You mean papers which would involve Lord Ducetoy?"

"Yes, and I am acting illegally in withholding them."

"Then why do you withhold them?" asked Rebecca. "Be sure it is best to follow the law."

"I don't know that," said Mr. Turner; "I have seen too much of law. These papers, if produced, would put Lord Ducetoy's property into the bankruptcy."

"But the creditors," said Rebecca, aghast; "the poor souls who have invested their money, have you no pity for them?"

"They would take any advantage of the company, and they must take their chance."

"But, pa, wrong can't make right. I am sorry for Lord Ducetoy, but for heaven's sake restore these papers."

"I can't," said Mr. Turner.

"Nonsense. Why not?" asked Rebecca.

"Because I have *burnt* them," said Mr. Turner; "now as you have your father's character, and in consequence his life in your hands, I wish to point out another little matter, more in your way of business."

Rebecca, sitting pale and calm, was dumb from that moment and for ever about her father's felony. But their relations from this moment were altered, never to be replaced on their former footing.

She never showed this fact to him, but he knew it, and acted on it. He was deferential to her after this. Sometimes he was insolent to her, but very seldom, and for a very short time; he was generally easy and almost jocular with her, but from this moment she was in a way mistress of the situation.

She had now entered into a community of guilt with her father. That her father's motives were of the highest order was certain, but still her father might be a convict to-morrow.

What was the effect of this singular community of fault

between them? A strange one to ordinary eyes. A love which had never existed before. If pity, combined with admiration and fear for the object, does not produce love, what does? Again, if admiration and trust do not produce love, what again does? These two hearts were together now.

But I must return to the original conversation. Rebecca said, "But these documents will be demanded of you, pa!"

"No, they won't, my dear. I have too many forgeries, those of my own name among others, by Sir Gorham and Captain Philpott, for them ever to ask for them. Our danger does not lie here."

"Where does it lie then, father?" said Rebecca.

"In this," said Mr. Turner; "they will try to get into the house, and murder me to get at their own forgeries. So don't leave me, girl, and let the little dog sleep with me."

And so he went to bed. And Rebecca spent the first evening of her engagement in brooding over the fire, alone and terrified.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THALATTA.

Two days after Mr. Morley called, and was told by the little maid that Miss Turner was too ill to see him, but she gave him a note, which he, as is usual in such cases, opened and read.

"DEAR SIR,—Let Sunday be as though it never had been. Forget it, and forget me. It was all a mistake from beginning to end. I should like to have seen Hetty; but that can never be. My love for you is unalterable. I never loved any one on earth as I do you. But what we talked of on Sunday is utterly and entirely impossible.

"REBECCA."

Morley stepped into Mr. Turner's study, and taking pen and ink, wrote—

"Come downstairs directly, and tell me all about it. Don't keep me waiting, for I have news for you, and but little time to give you. Look sharp, and don't dawdle. "A. M."

So she came down. She was very pale, but there was no sign of wildness about her. He was shocked at her appearance, but he did not show it at all. He received her affectionately, and kissed her.

"My dear Rebecca," he said, "can you explain to me the meaning of the note you sent me down just now?"

"No, Alfred," she said; "an explanation would involve others."

"So I have supposed for a very long time," he answered. "I have quite expected to hear of something like this for a year past. But that note I got this morning from you was never written. It does not exist."

"I am no fit wife for you," said Rebecca.

"I am surely the best judge of that. You are held to your words, Rebecca. Have you repented of that silly note? Cannot you trust me, as I am going to trust you?"

"If you knew all, Alfred!"

"Bah! sweetheart; I know more than all. Do you think that your sister knows nothing? Do you think that Hagbut has not got it out of her? Do you not think that Russel and Soper have not heard of it from him, and illustrated it? My story is that your father has raised money on Lord Ducetoy's title-deeds, to pay Carry's marriage portion."

"You never dared believe it of him?" said Rebecca.

"Not for one instant," said Mr. Morley, laughing; "only, this being the report about him in our little society, I asked his daughter to marry me. There is very little time to talk nonsense, my dear; let us therefore talk sense. If your father's affairs got utterly wrong, what earthly difference would it make between us? And under any circumstances, you know," he went on, laughing louder, "you can never be the plague and disgrace to me that Hetty has been."

Whenever he mentioned Hetty, a smile came on his face, and a brightness in his eye. What had Rebecca to say to such wooing? Why, nothing.

"I repent. I am all yours. I will never distrust you again."

"Bravely said. Now I am going utterly away from you, to leave you entirely alone, without one solitary friend, for a long time. I have no hopes in England; my chapel is only full of sailors, and sailors do not pay. But our connection has given me the new Tahiti mission, wisely, and well; for at Tahiti every one can manage the natives, but no one the sailors. Another man was appointed, but has got a good chapel, and has refused. They offered it to me this morning, and it came to me like a

gleam of light, pretty bird, that my work for my Master lay among the sailors, and I said yes."

"I see," said Rebecca, nodding her head, and smiling; "this is good."

"I am half a sailor myself, you know, and I can talk to our rough men in their own language without affectation and without mistake, which is a great thing; for men dislike following a man who exhibits ignorance on their own *spécialité*. They say, he talks seamanship, and makes errors which the cook's mate would be ashamed of; how can we trust him in other things? It is silly and illogical on their parts; but they are silly and illogical. For my part, I think the priest who simply confesses ignorance, and applies to them for instruction, will have a good chance with them; possibly better than mine. I mean the man who will show *them* his ignorance, and then show them their own. But we have not these men. Our men are all too scholastic; they will talk to our fellows about the one thing of which they know nothing—seamanship. Hagbut preached a nautical sermon at my chapel once, which made my ears burn with sheer shame; and the lubber believes to this day that he produced a profound impression—as indeed he did, of his own utter pretentious imbecility. I have not time to go into this. I feel that I am the right man in the right place; and, to use our Saviour's own words, humbly and reverently, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' Are you content?"

"I am more than content. You are doing well. Shall you be away long?"

"A year, at least."

"A whole year? And when do you go?"

"The day after to-morrow."

"That is very sudden. But is all right and well, and very good, Alfred? I shall know that you are not lost, but working, and shall leave home to prove to you that I am worthy of you. Yes. This is a little hard, and a little bitter, too: but it is right and good. You have forgiven my folly of this morning?"

"Why, I really don't know that there was any folly to forgive. You acted exactly as I should have wished my wife to act. You are the dearer to me for it."

"May I help you with your preparations?" she asked.

"My chest is always packed," he answered, with a smile. "It does not take long to ship such an old sailor as me. One chest of clothes, and one of books, are all I own; and my landlady has taken good care of them."

"But I may come and see you off?" she asked.

"Surely," he said ; and they passed on to talk of other matters, and talked until it was time for him to go.

She scarcely knew how to break this sudden resolution to her father ; whether he would think it a kind of desertion on Mr. Morley's part, she could not tell. He took it quite quietly, and only said, "So soon, hey ! Well, I am glad he has left me you. We will wait for him together, my child ; and perhaps when he comes to fetch you away, you shall take me with you out of this hateful, miserable place, to a happier one."

There was a wild, surging wind from the north-west, bringing with it occasional heavy showers of cold rain, and brilliant gleams of cold sunshine : one of those bitter days which are almost worse than any weather in England, except east. The river was brisk, though dull, leaden, and muddy, dashing in short crisp waves against the piles of Pilot Terrace. Mr. Morley was gone on board a little higher up the river, and Rebecca had said the last words to him. She was standing at the edge of the river, in the piercing blast, wrapped up from head to foot, shielding her little dog from the cold, and watching the ships pass swiftly seaward until his should come.

It was not long in coming. A beautiful schooner eager for her battle with the sea, curving her sharp high bows in triumphant anticipation, flying before the swift squall with only a foretopsail set. He stood upon the poop and waved his hand, and so the ship passed on eastward, under a gleam of sun, towards a heavy black cloud, which lay upon her path, and he was gone. And she stood silently weeping on the shore, and holding her little dog close to nearly the most desolate heart which beat in England that day.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOMEWARD ALONE.

BUT by degrees her silent crying stilled itself, and, the cold blast arousing her, she turned resolutely westward against the wind, which, cold as it was, caused her but little annoyance, for the heavy weariness which showed itself in her gait, and the feeling of solitude which gnawed at her heart, made her indifferent to the weather.

A gleam of such happiness so rapidly overclouded. She had

only had him for a few days, and had never realised actually her position towards him. Never, until she saw him on the deck of the schooner passing rapidly eastward down the river. Then she knew really, for the first time, that Morley had wooed her well; had understood her thoroughly, and persistently shown her the best side of herself and of himself also; had petted and encouraged what was good in her, and ignored what was bad; had gone so high in the art of wooing, that he had shown her herself at her best, and himself as something better still. And she found there was no one like him in the whole of her little world, and she believed no one like him in the larger world beyond hers. She knew that she loved him entirely, with her whole heart.

There was not much sentimentality in her love for him. He was very handsome, certainly, of a rare and peculiar beauty, dangerous to the "peace of mind" of most young ladies, but she thought little of that. It was his "way" which was so irresistible, and the impression left on her mind was that he had selected her, the poor wild girl who had been a plague to every one, to do her the highest honour that man can do women. That he was a penniless, friendless, and unpopular man she never considered. She looked on him as having descended from a high pedestal of perfect truth and perfect virtue, to do honour to her. She could not understand it, for, like most very noble people, she utterly undervalued herself; but the fact was the same. He loved her, and she had lost him.

So she thought as she set her face westward, in her solitude, towards her miserable home. If there was any more sentimentalism in her deep love, it was not for Morley. She could not be romantic and sentimental about him. In fact, a sentimental young lady would scarcely have liked her lover sailing away in a foretopsail schooner, for a twelvemonth, five days after he had proposed to her. In Rebecca's sensible eyes this only made him nobler and more dear to her; she was assured of his love, and could laugh at Russel and Soper, and all the rest of them.

But this young lady had a good deal of sentimentality also, but, strangely enough, or rather *naturally* enough, she reserved all her stores of that article, not for Morley, but for his daughter *Hetty*, whom she had never seen.

If one was a Frenchman one might write, "Sentimental love is born of Mystery. Calypso steps from her pedestal and assists Eros to bind the napkin over his eyes." But one is not a Frenchman, and so will not say it. There was certainly nothing Calypitic about Rebecca's love for Mr. Morley.

But with regard to his daughter. That young lady was a consummate mystery to her (which made Calypso step from her pedestal). And she had certainly, in some way or another, broken through all rules, which caused Rebecca to love her, while knowing nothing about her. (Calypso binds the eyes of Eros.) And so, fighting westward against the wind, she found herself thinking very much about Hetty. "She will be home before him, and we can talk together about him. I know that I shall love her."

Stereoscopes are to some only magnified photographs. Others have the stereoscopic eye. Let us look at her with a different eye—say the left.

There went wearily along the streets of Bermondsey that day a weak, ill-clad woman, with a baby on her arm, against the wind westward. There came such a driving, furious storm of cold rain, that this poor woman was forced to put into an archway, and took this opportunity of opening her bosom and giving the baby her milk.

While she was doing so a shadow passed before her, and she hurriedly was drawing her shawl over the arrangement, when she saw that it was only a woman, and was more at her ease.

It was a singular woman, too. Very young, very handsomely dressed, and wrapped up from head to foot in a shawl, the price of which would have kept that cowering woman for a twelvemonth. Her hat was of golden seal-skin, the value of which that poor woman had reason to know, and in it was set a storm petrel, a bird that woman knew too well also. She carried her head high, this lady, and was so beautiful in face and in carriage that the cowering woman turned away.

In her bosom this splendid lady had something which was not a baby, only a little dog, with bright eyes, who put its head out to sneeze.

She put her grand head down to look at it, and caught sight of her shivering companion. She spoke at once, in the high, clear, splendid voice of an unaffected English lady.

"My dear creature, you are very cold."

"Yes, my lady," said the woman, "but my master is colder."

"Where is he?" said Rebecca.

"He is gone to sea, my lady, with half his kit, poor dear. He broke his arm in the frost, hauling a rotten foretopsail halyard, and he missed a voyage, and we have pawned everything, and now my man is gone to sea again."

"So is mine," said Rebecca, without thinking.

"Yes, my dear lady, but your good gentleman has his full kit

aboard, no doubt. My poor man will be up reeling topsails in the snow, thin-clad, while yours is warm and comfortable."

"Do you worry and vex yourself all the time your husband is away?" asked Rebecca.

"What would be the good?" the woman answered. "I've got to live, and to hope."

"Has he left you money to live on?" asked Rebecca.

"Lord bless you, no, he hadn't got none to leave. He will bring back some, though."

"And what have you to live on, then?" asked Rebecca, deeply interested.

"Charing and needle-work."

"Have you plenty of it?"

"Yes," she said. "I don't need to be beholden, I have a connection among seafaring men and women, and I can make my three shillings a week till he comes back."

"Look here," said Rebecca, suddenly and quickly; "our cases are similar in some way, but your necessity is greater than mine. I have money, you have not. Take this five pounds. I meant it to buy a present for him, but had not time. When you want more, write to me."

"But I might be an impostor, Miss," said the woman, aghast.

"Your words show that you are none," said Rebecca, and giving her address, she walked quickly away.

Quiet, through having got thoroughly well tired, she turned, after an eight miles' walk, into her own dismal lane, and found herself confronted with Miss Soper and Mrs. Russel.

In small communities, news fly fast: the whole earth is a small community now, thanks to the telegraph; hence our telegrams, which always require to be emphatically contradicted next day. It had got about in the small Walham Green connection, that Mr. Morley was going to marry Miss Turner, but that she had shown such abominable temper that he had shipped on board a fast brig, and gone to sea; and that she had started early that morning, down to the docks, to bring him to book. This was too good a thing for Russel and Soper to miss. She must come home some time in the afternoon, and so Russel and Soper cruised off the end of the lane, as Anson did for the Acapulco plate ship; knowing that if they could lay her by the board they would have something to reward them.

Their cruise was (comparatively speaking) as long as Lord Anson's, and in the end very little more successful. They made raids into the lane, and took Akin's house, and Mr. Spicer's house—with tracts; but they were always soon on their post off the

lane's end ; and after a time the Acapulco ship arrived, and they boarded her, to the intense delight of Akin and Mr. Spicer, who were watching.

Rebecca, tall, handsome, fresh from the sea, head in air, with sealskin hat and storm-petrel for ornament, thinking of things far away, was arrested by Russel and Soper. Mab, who had not been let to walk, had accommodated herself to circumstances so far ; but Soper was too much for her, and she barked so furiously at that good lady that she was put down ; a liberty which she used for a cloak of licentiousness, for she bit Soper's gown without a moment's hesitation, and kept hold of it, too ; which so agitated Soper that fat old Russel had to do the talking.

"She is a varmint little thing," said Akin to Spicer, in the distance.

"So is her mistress," said Mr. Spicer.

"My dear," said Russel, "we were here, and saw you coming. Are we to congratulate you ?"

"On what ?" said Rebecca. "Mab, you naughty little thing, be quiet."

"On your approaching marriage with Mr. Morley."

"No, I think not," said Rebecca. "He sailed for Tahiti this morning. But I am very much obliged to you all the same."

"Is he coming back soon ?" said Miss Soper, who had been delivered from Mab by Rebecca.

"I should think not," said Rebecca. "It is quite impossible that he can be back under a twelvemonth ; possibly, not for two years. But it is of no consequence that I know of."

And so those two very good people went away, and told the whole truth to the connection. And the whole truth was, that Mr. Morley had found out too much, and had shipped for Tahiti.

CHAPTER XXV.

HAGBUT IN A NEW LIGHT.

BUT to Rebecca's great and never-ending astonishment, Hagbut came out in an entirely new line at this juncture. Hagbut was stupid, vain, avaricious, and selfish. You will find such characters in every form of religion, just as you will find Morley's. But Hagbut was an exceptional man. The man had power. He had

put a few ends before him, social and religious; and in steadily pursuing those ends, he looked neither to the right nor the left. The success of his own small religious connection, and his own personal governance of that connection, were his two great objects. Take him apart from those objects, and you would find a *man*, not without strength, but who seemed narrow, because he referred all matters in heaven and earth to his own service and that of his own sect. If any matter did not appear to him to interfere with these two objects, he *could* be as just and as generous as another.

Now Rebecca had done no such thing as the scandalous Hetty; and besides—and besides——well, he had been fond of Rebecca once on a time. And sometimes, when Carry was most religious, and most affectionate—when he was wearied with religious work, and would gladly have heard something of the world which he was bound to despise in words, Hagbut thought seriously that he had made a mistake. Rebecca would not have him, it is true; still Carry, with her money, was a great bore, and Rebecca was worth ten of her.

Russel and Soper invaded him when he was thinking of these things, and saying to himself that he was glad the poor girl was so well fitted with Morley; and honestly, and, as far as he was able, tenderly, wishing her good luck. Russel and Soper did not meet with the reception they anticipated.

"He has gone and left her," said Miss Soper. "Rebecca Turner was down after him to the docks, this morning; but he has gone and left her."

"He has gone to provide a home for her," said Mr. Hagbut.

"Mr. Hagbut, it is not so. Mr. Morley has run away. She told us with her own lips that he was gone away, and that she didn't care when he came back."

"I know she didn't say *that*," said Hagbut, bending his ugly pale face on Miss Soper, and thrusting out his powerful jaw in a way which Miss Soper did not like. "What were her words?"

"Her words were, that he was gone for a twelvemonth, and that it was no matter," said Mrs. Russel.

"See how you stand cross-examination, you two," said Hagbut. "I can't trust a word you say. Now look you here, you two. That girl is my sister-in-law, and a good girl, too; and Morley is the most refined and educated man in our connection—a connection which wants, what I have not got, refinement and education, more than most. I won't have Rebecca's name pulled about. She is a fine creature."

The more cowardly Russel was abashed at once; not so the

more resolute and sourer Soper, who had never felt a man's influence, but who had got her living by bullying girls.

"You pulled her name about at one time pretty freely, yourself," said she.

"Yes, but that was my business. This is none of yours. You mind what I say, and leave the girl alone. I won't have her meddled with. Mind, I mean what I say."

And, indeed, he looked very much as if he did. Pale, ugly, and generally lazy, as he was, there was an immense amount of powerful animation in the man, with some shrewd sense. Russel and Soper had brains enough to find out this; Rebecca had brains enough to find out more.

She was alone that evening, with an atlas before her, following Morley across the map, when the little maid told her that Mr. Hagbut was come to see her. And she said, "Show him in."

Mr. Hagbut came in, and they greeted one another civilly; after which, Mr. Hagbut pointed to the atlas, and said—

"After *him*?"

"Yes."

"You are a happy woman, Rebecca, if it is all right between you and Morley. Come, sister-in-law, tell me that it is."

"It is 'all right,' as you call it," said Rebecca, laughing. "He is going to be away for an indefinite time; but we are, what the world calls, engaged."

"I wish you happy, most heartily," said Hagbut, leaning his ugly face on his great fat hands, and looking at her. "It is your own fault if you are not. He is refined, and a gentleman; I am neither the one nor the other."

"I think you are a very good man, Mr. Hagbut," she said, looking him frankly in the face.

"I do among vulgar people, being vulgar myself. And I do good where a gentleman would fail. But, Rebecca, it is well we did not marry."

"It is very well, indeed," said Rebecca.

"I suppose you have often put this case to yourself, with regard to me—'If I had married that ugly, fat man, without ideas, without the manners of a gentleman, without education; death would have been better than life.' You have put it so, have you not?"

"Not so strongly as that, Mr. Hagbut; but still very strongly," said Rebecca, with resolution.

"Did you ever put the other side of the question?" asked Hagbut. "Did you ever think of me? Did you ever think for one instant what a hell on earth (I beg pardon) my life would have been; tied for life to a beautiful, clever, refined, and furiously

rebellious woman like yourself? You congratulate yourself on your escape; congratulate me on mine. We should not have lived together a month in decency; for my will is immovable."

Rebecca paused for a long time. At last she said—

"It seems to me, brother-in-law, that you are a very honest man. You served me ill once; but let us forget all, and be friends: God knows I want them. Come, brother-in-law, do not be my enemy, although we can never be companions; for we should squabble so dreadfully over ways of speech on religious matters, you know: and I doubt if we should agree with regard to Hetty."

"What do you know of her?" said Mr. Hagbut.

"Nothing. What has she done?"

"If you do not know, I see no reason for telling you. I have taken my side there, and will maintain it."

"Well, if you go against her, you will spare me?" said Rebecca.

Hagbut had not have taken an oath in a court of justice to save his life; but, in his heart, without speech, he swore a deep and terrible oath then. No religionist can be without sentiment; and the deepest sentimental part of Hagbut's soul was aroused by the spectacle of this utterly solitary and defenceless girl, whom he had once thought that he had loved, in spite of his fear of her, alone against the world. Hagbut made affirmation silently to himself, that he would stand between this poor child and the world, which meant their small connection. And he did it, like a leal and loyal soul. It is easy to see the worst of these men. You must know them to find out the best of them. For my part, I have known many ministers of religion. Roman Catholic verbiage, or Dissenting verbiage, may be offensive to the ear; but in twenty years I have only known two bad ministers of religion of any sect, and that is not a large percentage, after all: one speaks, of course, merely of a large personal acquaintance. Being on dangerous ground, I will step off it; only enrolling my opinion, that the ministers of religion, with all their eccentricities, are nearly the most valuable class in the community.

Hagbut spoke to Rebecca no more after this. Carry would have been jealous had she known that he had said so much. But Russel and Soper's vilipendings of Rebecca were now reduced to sniffs and glances.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE GAZETTE.

AND so it came about, that Rebecca, who began, at the very beginning of this story, by wishing herself dead, wished nothing of the kind now; but only wished like Jane Eyre, "that she might keep in good health and not die."

Yet she was infinitely worse off than in the old times when she wished herself dead. She was in utter and entire solitude, for her father was not much better company than can be found in the saner side of Bedlam. She had not a soul to speak to in any sort of way approaching the confidential, except Mab, and Mab could not answer her.

Although Hagbut had stilled all tongues, with his fat emphatic fist, yet even he could not prevent people looking at Rebecca in chapel: and she knew that they were looking at her, and she hated it. She never saw them looking at her, but she felt it; and the effect of this consciousness on her face was to produce an expression of calm, careless anger, which assisted devotion in no way whatever.

Had she known that they were only studying, in a humble way, her imperial, magnificent beauty, reading it like a book, and learning from it, as one learns art at first, from a great and traditionally authenticated picture, she might have been content, and have given them at times softer developments of her not very mobile face. But she thought they were only staring at her; and she hated her chapel worse than ever.

She felt this more than ever one morning, when she had gone alone, her father being too ill to come. "I will never go again," she said. "They hate me." And she stalked out through the crowd with her head in the air.

Soper was helping Russel along, and said, "Did you ever see anything like *that*?"

"A bold-faced jig," said Russel.

"I mean," said Soper the schoolmistress, "did you ever see such beauty in all your life; because I have had some experience, and I never did."

Soper and Russel went their ways, and Rebecca went hers; but she was followed home by two admirers.

Mr. Akin and Mr. Spicer. When they had turned into their own lane, they came up beside her, one on each side, and spoke to her boldly and eagerly.

"Glad to see you about, Miss. Mr. Turner is quite well, I hope?"

"My father is not at all well," said Rebecca. "I am so glad to see you two at chapel."

"We will leave that alone, Miss, at present," said Mr. Spicer. "We want to speak to you very particular indeed, Miss. Don't us, Jim?"

"Indeed we do."

"You see, Miss," said Mr. Spicer the sweep, "we sweeps as a general rule are the cleanest of all working chaps, always taking a bath afore we turns in. But we have what we call the black bed, into which we turns in all our crock when there's a difficult flue early in the morning. And we got orders for Beaufort House, and (you won't tell on a man for breaking the act) I lay in the black bed with my youngest son Tom, to put he up the flue before the police was round. It was agen the law I know, but that boy loves his profession; I should say his art: for that boy is as much an artist in a crooked flue, as the great Anelay is in the *Mysteries of London*. With a father's feelings I went with him of course, and we was no sooner out of our house, than he said—

"See to those coves round Mr. Turner's, father."

"Burglars?" asked Rebecca.

"There was two on them, Miss. It was pretty dark, but we could see. One was a young swell, and the other I know'd."

"This is very alarming," said Rebecca. "What did you do?"

"I called out the name of the man I know'd. I said, 'Bob Syers, you hook it.' And he offered in return a low remark, referring to a misfortune of mine in years gone by; but he hooked it all the same."

"Whatever shall we do?" said Rebecca.

"Put the police to watch. Syers is well know'd, as is doubtless the young swell."

"I can't employ the police," said Rebecca, incautiously.

"Whatever shall I do?"

In the following paragraph I am only speaking of what I have seen with my own eyes. It is wrong and immoral, but there it is, for better or for worse—a great deal for worse, I should say.

Rebecca had won these men. Not by her beauty, for their eyes were too utterly untrained to see her beauty. They would probably have pronounced Buckingham Palace to be finer than Wells, Bayeux, or Salisbury, and have called Winchester a barn. They would possibly have called a red-faced Devon lass far prettier than Rebecca. It was not her beauty which had won these men, it was her sympathy and geniality. They were neither of them

very respectable men ; but either of them would have fought for her, merely in return for kind words and kind acts to their wives, at any time. Now that she had confessed to them that there was something the matter in her father's house, which forbade the police being called in, they would die for her, or risk it. There was a new bond of sympathy between her and these gentlemen now, which made them ready for anything in her behalf. It is all wrong and bad, but so it *is*. You don't know where the criminal class begins. *Still less do you know where the sympathy with the criminal class begins.*

And further, Mr. Turner, solicitor and Methodist, had been an offensive person to them both, by his mere existence hitherto. Now that there was an obvious hitch in his affairs, insoluble by those enemies of mankind the Metropolitan police, they began to have a fellow-feeling with him, which they never had before. The sympathies of people like Mr. Spicer and Mr. Akin, are distinctly *not* on the side of the law. On all sentimental grounds they were perfectly ready to assist Rebecca.

"Lord bless you, Miss," said Mr. Spicer, "don't vex yourself. We will watch. You have got a little dog as will bark."

"Yes," said Rebecca, showing Mab.

"Pretty dear," said Jim Akin, "there she is. Let me have the handling of her, Miss, please. She is worth ten pound, Miss ; there ain't a p'int about this dog which is at fault, Miss," he continued, nursing Mab.

"Never mind the dog, Jim," said Mr. Spicer.

"Ah, but I *do* mind the dog, Spicer," said Mr. Akin. "You ain't a cynosure in dogs, you see."

"He'd serve six months for a rat-tailed terrier, Miss," said Mr. Spicer. "We all have our fancies. But see here ; durst you fire a gun ?"

"Yes, I know how ; my father has shown me."

"Then," said Mr. Spicer, "every time that little dog barks, you fire a gun out a winder, and me and Jim will be with you. They won't try it on often, if you do that, Miss. Their nerves is never good. If it only comes to nothing at all, they will get scared ; if we get 'em *in* the house, why then we shall know what to do. *You* needn't bother about the policemen. In fact, we don't want no police round here."

"I will do what you tell me," said Rebecca. "If anything were to happen, you could hold your tongues—keep silent—could you not ?"

Mr. Spicer sniffed, and Mr. Akin, in giving back Mab, winked. "Tell her about the backer, Spicer," said this coarse young man.

"Hold your tongue, you fool," said Mr. Spicer. "What do you suppose the young lady would want to know about the running of a twopenny-halfpenny, four hundred boxes of cigars, so high up the river as this, in a ballast lighter? I am ashamed on you. Good afternoon, Miss; depend on us." And so they went.

Leaving Rebecca with the terrible impression that she had connected herself with the criminal classes, not through her own fault, but utterly without hope of extrication. She was so utterly puzzled by her quaint position, that she was actually whimsical, almost humorous over it.

"I shall be in gaol, my dear," she said to Mab. "And you will be reduced to bacon and cold potatoes, at Akin's, until I come out again. I *wish* father had not broken the law in this matter, even from his very high motives. Bother you," she continued, shaking her fist at the law of the land, "you will pass over Sir Gorham Philpott, and Lord Ducetoy, and you will catch my father. You Brute, not if I can stop it."

She had come at her purpose before she reached home. Her father was in a very difficult position: detaining papers which he had no right to detain: detaining them on very chivalrous grounds. But he had only seen part of the consequences in a sentimental, or as she put it, Walham Green way; the first thing she had to do, was to put the Limehouse view of the question before him.

So she burst in on him suddenly, and said, "Pa, you have made a nice mess of it. They are going to rob and murder us all. They were about the house two nights ago."

"So I suppose," said Mr. Turner.

"So you *suppose*," said Rebecca. "Well, I tell you, pa, that I am not used to it, and that I am not going to stand it. Trampling about in other people's gardens, indeed! I tell you, pa, that I am not going to endure it."

"Are *you* going to leave me, Becky?" said Mr. Turner.

Rebecca had not calculated on this. The thread of her argument was unravelled.

"Leave you, dear," she said, kneeling at his feet. "Why, father, father, I have no one left but you, now Alfred is gone. My dear, I will never leave you this side of the grave."

"Is Alfred Morley actually gone?" said Mr. Turner, eagerly.

"Yes, but he will come back. He is only gone for a weary year or two; just to leave us alone, you know."

"I thought from your manner that you were angry with me; stay by me."

"I was and am angry with you," said Rebecca; "you are moping

and brooding when you should be acting. We want your brains to direct us; we will find hands to assist."

"We?" said Mr. Turner.

"Yes, we," said Rebecca; "Spicer and Akin and I, not to mention Mab. Tell us what to do."

"You have strange accomplices," said Turner.

"And you have done a strange thing. Their motives are as high as yours. They help us from mere love."

"What have they seen?" asked Mr. Turner, rousing himself.

"Our house was 'attempted' two days ago by two men. One, Syers, a burglar, and the other a young gentleman. Spicer the sweep knew Syers, and challenged him. The young gentleman he did not know."

Mr. Turner lay back in his chair and laughed—laughed again almost heartily; then he began to speak.

"My dear child, this is exactly as I supposed. The man Syers is, as you tell me, you being acquainted with the criminal class so intimately, a burglar. Now the young gentleman who was with him is Edmund Philpott, whose forgeries, those of my own name in particular, I hold."

"Well," said Rebecca.

"You may well say 'well,'" said Mr. Turner, "you don't understand business; indeed no one will soon, now that financing has come in, and the L. C. & D. can't exactly make out whether Mr. P. owes them six millions of money, or they owe him two-and-a-half millions. But you understand enough for this. That a Limited Liability Company bought the Gorham-Philpott business for £200,000, and have made a mess of it, as limited companies always do and always will. We don't *want* limited liability, girl, we want unlimited responsibility. Ha! look at M. when he was short: what did the trade say to the limited liability companies? Why they said, one and all, 'we will have the man and not a parcel of irresponsible shareholders. We know the man, and the man is honest as knows the business,' says they, 'but we don't know five hundred irresponsible shareholders'; and the trade pulled the man through, and there he is now.

"Well, child, you can't understand this, though every reader of a newspaper can. This Gorham-Philpott business was sold; and I gave up my position as their attorney. And first of all I did a wrong thing for our relation, Lord Ducetoy—I kept his papers here to save them from the smash. And secondly, to save Sir Gorham, I kept all the papers which young Edmund had forged."

"And you did well and nobly," said Rebecca. "You have broken the law, I doubt not. But I am with you."

"Well, that is finely said," said Mr. Turner. "But don't you go breaking the law; you know one is quite enough in a family. Listen, and don't talk nonsense. The Limited Company has gone to unutterable ruin. The property of the old house was guaranteed to the Company, and their deeds must come into the Bankruptcy Court. Some I have burnt in my brooding folly, some are here still. I hardly know, child, what I have destroyed and what I have not. But young Philpott has forged heavily: he believes that his forgeries are here, and he will murder us all."

"And indeed he will murder none of us," said Rebecca; "I'll sort him if he comes here. Pa, dear, what on earth ever caused you to be so silly?"

"As how?"

"As to burn those papers."

"Brooding and brooding," said Mr. Turner; "brooding about your mother eternally, for one thing. I don't know what I have burnt and what I have not."

"Can't you look and see, pa?"

"No, I am gone beyond that. It kills me to look at papers. I am a lost man."

"Are you in debt, pa?"

"No. There will be money enough when I am gone. But Hagbut told me on our last meeting about business matters that he saw no signs of grace in me. And he is an experienced man in spiritual matters; therefore I doubt that I have never been convicted of sin, and am damned everlastingly. That is all."

"This is worse nonsense than the other," said Rebecca, furiously; "pa, how can you sit there and talk like that, with the good God listening to you? Hagbut is a good fellow, but he ought to be hung if he told you that."

"He did not, my dear. I know it," said Mr. Turner.

"Well, I can do nothing with you," said Rebecca, "except ask you not to talk nonsense. Do you think they will try the house again?"

"Certainly."

"Shall you shoot young Philpott, if you meet him?" said Rebecca.

The answer was a curious one. Mr. Turner raised a wan, pale face to hers, from which every kind of expression was banished. Her father's brain had gone. The mechanical work of his office for so many years, his terrible troubles with his wife in old times, and this last miserable, silly, inextricable confusion, had been too

much for him. Rebecca saw that she could not trust him again.

Once see that dead stare in the eyes of one you love, and love may remain ; but confidence has departed for ever.

Rebecca repeated her question, with an artificial laugh. " You won't shoot young Philpott, will you, pa ? "

His answer was worse than his silence. He looked at her steadily, and with some recollection of the old days, of which she knew nothing, said—

" Trout should be as bright as peacocks before you should catch them. Or to be more correct, like the butterfly called Vanessa Io. You should lay them carefully in cowslips and grass ; an orchis or two atop is not amiss ; Morio or Pyramidalis would do ; but above all things a sprig of ' Geum,' which the hinds call ' Avens,' Lord knows why. Seek also in the damp meadows for your Ophioglossum, and put a piece of it in your biggest trout's mouth. And when she sees it she will know what you mean by her. And she will walk in the sun along the south wall, and will pick for you Rosemary, Old man, and the flower which fools call ' Prince's feather,' but which men call ' Love lies a-bleeding.' That is what she will do, and then go and marry George Somers."

" Lord help me ! " said poor Rebecca. " His mind is gone."

Not gone, Rebecca, only babbling of green fields. Most men have lived at least three lives before they get married, and once and for all lay everything at the feet of one woman. He was only dazed a little in his brain, and, as I have noticed in dying men, reverting to the first of his lives—a life she knew not of. He was shrewd enough next morning ; his keenness was more painful to her than his wandering.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE WALPURGIS NIGHT.

MR. TURNER slept, or pretended to, till nine o'clock, then he began furiously ringing his bell. Rebecca came to him in her dressing-gown.

" Is the *Times* come, child ? " he said.

" How could it be come, pa ? "

" Go eastward, child, and meet it. Quick, go ! "

She dressed herself and went eastward, she had got nearly to

the South Kensington Museum before she got the *Times*, and she hurried back with it. Her father sat up in bed while he opened it. After glancing at a column or so, he said, "What a thundering lie!"

"What, pa?"

"Philpott & Co., Limited," he answered, "bankrupt for £800,000. Why, child, I could account for £1,200,000. I will have another nap after that. If any genteel-looking man calls, tell him—well, tell him he had better call somewhere else. We know too much here."

What between Turner's wildness of the night before, and his shrewd jocularly now, poor Rebecca was utterly puzzled. One thing she knew, and that was that Morley, Hartop, and the never-seen Hetty, were all at sea, that her father's mind was going, and that he and she were alone in the world together.

One can see how our nation has developed by turning over old novels; for one, over "*Dombey and Son*," written by Dickens, a man not unacquainted with the ways of this world, but by our new lights rather behind his time, in a few particulars.

For instance, Mr. Dombey goes bankrupt for the mean sum of one hundred thousand pounds. That was all very well in 1848, but we have improved on that since. Mr. Perch, the messenger, congratulated himself on the fact that Dombey had gone for "one hundred—thousand—pound." That is but a small smash now. Great, and heretofore trusted names in trade, seem to be vying with the worst of the old aristocratic scoundrels, and beating them hollow. The frightful recklessness of the habitual gambler, Lord Mornington (about £700,000, leaving no one unpaid in the end), or that of the unhappy boy just dead (some £200,000), is fairly beaten out of calculation by the deficiencies of some of the clearest and best heads in the world of business. How these men can keep sane under such a nightmare of hopeless debt is the wonder to some. See if this little case of the Philpotts is overstated in any way. Do we not all know of an honoured (justly honoured) member of the House, now dead and beyond trouble, who sat later than any one at the House; sat through the most wearisome of business, *sooner than go home*. There was a leaden weight of £300,000 on that man's soul. That hopeless deficiency of capital, which, well used, would have saved Bethnal Green, or the Isle of Dogs, from their present state, hanging on his mind; hanging round his neck. It was no error of his, but of younger branches of his family. He was one of the purest, best, and noblest of men, but condemned to silence for the love which he bore to his family.

Such an old age is not good to think about. Better to study

William Blake, when he is most wildly melancholy, and most unutterably sad. Still in Blake's deepest sadness, there is almost always tenderness and hope. And so we should think of this poor member, who had never one selfish thought in his heart. Turn to Blake's great masterpiece, "Death's Door" * (which I have known since I was six years old, and which never palls on one), when you think of an old man, dishonoured through no fault of his, creeping to his tomb, as Sir Gorham Philpott was to his.

The younger members of a dishonoured family will, however, sometimes make a fight to save what cannot be saved, more particularly where there has been criminality. Young Philpott was distinctly criminal. He had forged more boldly than Sir John Paul. He was, unlike that man, dissolute, dissipated, and utterly reckless. He was perfectly safe if he could recover his own forgeries, and he knew that Turner had them all. Could he get those forgeries in his own hand, he was well provided for. With a view to these contingencies he had bought heavily in foreign funds, denying himself every kind of luxury to do so. In the case of a mere bankruptcy, these funds could not be tracked, but in the case of a criminal prosecution, his money was of little value to him, for he would spend his time at Portland. This made him desperate.

Another thing made him still more desperate. This young forger was a very handsome young fellow, of good manners, and his family had caused him to make a great alliance with another great house; and so he had married, somewhat against his will, one of the most beautiful and charming women ever born.

He married her first, and fell in love with her afterwards, as is often the case. His love for her grew as time went on: her

* Notes are very unpopular, but one seems necessary here. The piece I mean is to be found at p. 224 of Gilchrist's "Life of Blake," but has been copied many times. A bent old man, doubled up with age, is hobbling on crutches into a vault. He is not well clad, and the winds of the world are blowing on him from behind, and helping him towards the dark doorway—a half-open iron door set in Cyclopean stonework. The attitude and gait of the old man are, as far as my experience goes, not only unapproached but unapproachable. Many Frenchmen—and a few Englishmen—can paint action in double-quick time. Blake here has expressed action, not in double-quick time, or even in quick time, but in *slow* time. I have no space to descant on the marvellous sentimental beauties of this wonderful piece, worthy to rank with Michael Angelo's "Lorenzo de Medici," or Velasquez's "Orlando Muerto." Below the feet of the old man, dimly seen in the darkness, are the barred windows of the charnel-house, to which we must all come. But above and aloft, in blazing sunlight, is the newly-awakened figure of a young man rising naked and wondering into the wonders of the new life.

exquisite grace, her perfect equable temper, her beauty, her deference to him, her intelligence—all had their effect on him. And after two years, he awoke one morning, by her side, and saw the whole of his very ghastly position. He was a felon, who might be in Cold-Bath Fields to-morrow, and she thought him an honest and respectable man.

"She would stand the bankruptcy, but she could not stand *that*," was what he said. "By the Lord! I have a good mind to tell her the whole business, and get it over."

So it happened one morning that Mrs. Philpott, turning over in her bed, found her husband kneeling at the bedside with the sheets bathed in blood. "I have hurt my head," he said. "I got out of bed incautiously, and have broken my head over the dressing-table." She was piteous and tender over his accident; little thinking that the young man, in his mad despair, had rushed against the wall. Enough of such things; the man was desperate.

His desperation little matters to us, save that he brought it to Turner's house, and so involved our Rebecca, and her dog Mab. In a little story, about homely facts like these, one has not room for one's rascals. Neither has one the genius of Shakspeare to develop one's rascal (Falstaff) until wrong gets to be right, and one loves him.

Rebecca said to her father, "Pa, haven't you made a great mess of it?"

"Very great indeed, my dear."

"Why don't you tell the whole truth, pa?"

"Because I should be in Cold-Bath Fields Prison, my dear."

"But we can't come out of it, dear pa, any way."

"My dear child," said Mr. Turner; "the whole thing is a stale-mate at chess. No one dare move for his life. I have seen worse muddled matters than this got through." And, indeed, he gave her proof.

"Why, even in Paul's case," he said; "if it had not been for a high-minded and indignant parson, the whole thing would have dropped through. I tell you, child, that you don't know business. Nobody is safe except a magistrate's butler. I am very, very tired again, Rebecca. I am going to die."

"Pa, you had better go to bed again, if you talk such nonsense as that."

"I am going, my dear. I shall sleep through the day, and wake at night. They will try the house to-night. Be ready for them."

"How shall I be ready for them, father?"

"Bless the girl, I don't know. Ducetoy's deeds are in the iron

safe. Philpott's papers are in the box under my bed. Do the best you can, child ; I am horribly drowsy—deadly drowsy. They will try the house to-night, and if the house gets into the possession of the police, I can't say what will happen. Go and see to matters, I am going to sleep."

Rebecca, seeing that there was nothing more to be got out of her father, did probably the quaintest and most indiscreet thing which she ever did in all her life. Matters were very desperate with her. Anticipated disaster had been familiar with her for some time. But here was disaster itself. Disaster of the very worst kind. She knew perfectly well that in the opinion of experienced lawyers about the great bankruptcy of the Philpotts, her father must sooner or later, through his folly, be involved. How deep she knew not. Her father, with the highest motives possible, had broken the law. She went for advice and assistance to people whom she dreamt had had some experience that way themselves.

It was twelve o'clock, high noon, when she put her hat on, and stepped across the lane to Mrs. Akin.

Mrs. Akin was in a deluge of soapsuds. She took in washing. Rebecca said to her, "Mrs. Akin, is your husband at home?"

"Dear Miss," she said; "no. He is out with his barrer. There is some husbands, Miss, which you will find yourself, when you are married, and a nicer gentleman I never see, I am sure, who objects to any washing at home at all, but wants it all put out, and I am sure I hope for your favours, Miss. Some will stand one washing-day in the week, and some won't. But my dear man, he has a washing-day every week, and never grumbles. He may come round home to dinner, Miss, but I ask you to look at his little home, full of damp linen; you are a-sneezing yourself. If he comes home shall I make him step across?"

"If you would be so good," said Rebecca.

"He would step further than that for you, Miss," she said; "there is a little one in heaven pleading for you with us, Miss. The old fellow shall come across."*

Rebecca left the costermonger's wife—not a noticeable woman in any way—and went next door to the chimney-sweep's wife, who was decidedly a noticeable person.

She was a very stout, florid woman, with all the ill-temper which is produced by the accumulation of fat round the heart; she scowled on Rebecca.

* To meet any charge of want of verisimilitude from any one not acquainted with the labouring classes so well as myself, I have reproduced actual dialogue.

"Is Mr. Spicer at home, please?" she said.

"No, he ain't."

"I am very sorry for that, for I wanted to speak to him."

"What about?"

"I only wanted a little advice," said Rebecca.

"I can give you some of that. Don't you go trampolining about with those Methodist parsons too much. *They* are no good."

"I shall not have the chance of doing so any more, Mrs. Spicer," said she.

"And a good job, too. And now you have come to us for advice, I'll advise you a little more. Don't you come here unsettling my man's mind, and getting him to chapel, and setting his mind to the keeping of the law about the boys. Why I suppose your advice has cost me a cool £20 a year. He won't send a boy up a flue now since he has taken to consort with *you*. And, if you knew anything at all, you would know there was flues which could not be swep' without boys. And our connection resents it naturally. My man says, 'it is agin the law,' and they make answer, 'do you accuse us of abetting an' breaking the law?' and he, with his spirit, makes answer, 'I do.' 'Then you need not call again, Mr. Spicer,' they says; and that is *your* doing."

"You are very impertinent and entirely wrong," said Rebecca; "if I have prevented Mr. Spicer, my very good friend, from sending boys up these horrible chimneys, I am very glad. I would have any one transported who sent those children up the chimneys. I want to know when Mr. Spicer will be at home."

"Then you just shan't. I don't want him near yours. There's worse gone on in that house than sending boys up flues. Better send a boy up a flue than chuck a woman downstairs. You shan't see him—you sha'n't see him—lawk, old man, is that you?"

It was indeed that worthy chimney-sweep, who had been awakened by his wife's voice, and had heard the whole of the argument while he was dressing. And a very fine, grave-looking man Mr. Spicer was too; ugly, but rather grand, owing none of his good looks to his complexion, which was rendered very pale by daily applications of soot. He laid his hand on his wife's shoulder, and with the cool determination which seems almost a *spécialité* in his trade,* beckoned to her to retire, which she did, perfectly dumb.

* Chimney-sweeps are but little known or understood. Very few people know that that splendid young man, Sadler, who raced Kelly himself so hard the other day, was a chimney-sweep. I was trying once to make peace between a working bricklayer (Harris) and a working cooper (Letwell). Old Harris struck out in pride of family; Letwell's sister (I think) had

"We will walk across the road, Miss, if you please," said Mr. Spicer, and he led the way. As soon as they were clear of the house he said, "The best woman in the world, Miss, if you only knew it."

"So I should fancy," said Rebecca; "she does not like me, but there are many others who do not. In fact I do not at all like myself."

"Indeed, Miss!" said Mr. Spicer.

"No," said Rebecca; "I do not like myself at all. I do not *hate* myself, Mr. Spicer; I only dislike and despise myself. For you know, Mr. Spicer, I am a most contemptible fool."

"Indeed, Miss. Now, I should not have thought that, unless you had told me. But it is no doubt true, you are better educated than I am."

"You are not a gentleman, Mr. Spicer," said Rebecca, laughing in spite of herself.

"No, Miss; but in what particular?"

"When any one accuses themselves to a *gentleman*, Mr. Spicer, the gentleman excuses them. Now, you have confirmed my view of myself, doubtless from politeness; but still, you are no gentleman. You should have told me that I was one mass of wisdom; as it is, you have merely confirmed my opinion, somewhat emphatically, that I am a contemptible fool."

"I only meant to mind my manners, Miss; and my manners tell me, that you should never contradict a lady. That is what Mr. Hagbut calls the unwritten law. That is about the size of *that*."

"Well," said Rebecca; "we must not joke any more, Spicer; I am in serious trouble."

"We know all about it, my dear Miss," said Spicer; "the only question is *When* and *where*?"

"The *when* is to-night, I am afraid; and the *where* will be inside the house."

"Then there is no reason for much talk, Miss. The least said the soonest mended. Jim and I will come in and lay down anywhere."

"But I want to explain to you," went on Rebecca.

"Just exactly what we don't want, Miss. We want to know nothing. Did you ever hear a man cross-examined?"

"No."

"Ah! If the grand jury would take the trouble to follow some *married a sweep*. Old Harris afterwards got two months for a violent breach of the revenue laws, about which I had warned him; so I suppose there was no further question about family precedence."

of their 'true bills' downstairs, instead of going off to play billiards, they wouldn't send so much downstairs as they do. I don't want no cross-examination, unless I can say, No. Tell me and Jim what you want done, but nothing more."

"Can Mr. Akin and you sleep together in one garret? And can you know nothing at all?"

"We can sleep together well enough, and we can easy manage holding our tongues, if there is nothing told us to talk about."

"Then come about ten o'clock, please, and I will have everything arranged for you."

Her father slept all day, but at night got up and dressed himself, and took dinner and wine. Then, setting all the doors open, he walked up and down the house. At the last she told him what she had done; and he, having got feeble and ill again, was persuaded to go to bed, with his clothes and his pistol, all ready.

"I shall not sleep a wink," he said; and saying so, laid his weary head over, and was asleep in one moment.

Then Rebecca began *her* tiger walk up and down the house, until Mr. Akin and Mr. Spicer turned in. Mr. Akin, a scientific and experienced hand, got Mab, and put her to sleep in the small of his back; which, as he explained to his companion, was the wakefullest place of all for a dog. Mab was well enough content, and scarcely recognised her mistress, during her frequent visits to her two sleeping friends. For they soon slept, after a consultation about taking off their boots. Mr. Spicer could never, he said, sleep well in his boots, unless he was three-quarters on. But Mr. Akin, having pointed out to him that this job would come to rough-and-tumble in any way, or might come to Chevy-high-ho the grinder, Mr. Spicer determined to sleep without even the removal of his boots; which determination he put in force with the rapidity of a man who has to do his day's work long before other people are awake.

It was a wild night, dripping wet, with great rushes of wind from the westward—the middle of a wild spring, when Rebecca began her night watch. She set dim candles in different rooms, and began her walk up and down; going from her own room along the main passage at the head of the stairs, towards her father's door, and passing that to the room where her two indifferent, honest friends slept and snored.

The wind howled at every window and door, in the crazy old house; and, with an ear tuned to concert-pitch, by anxiety and nervousness, she listened for something more than the wind, but nothing came.

It would have been less dreary, perhaps, had the night been silent and still. But the dreariness of that house to one listening for suspicious sounds, and hearing a hundred, was terrible, even before the lane was still and asleep. After that, terror grew into horror, and horror into a kind of temporary loss of judgment.

Dim, inexpressible, causeless terrors come, I believe, on the most prosperous of us, when we wake in the night, in the dark. I know a military officer of good repute, excellent courage, respectable fortune, and without one solitary anxiety in this world, who takes his recreation in these sad, solitary hours, by thinking of *death*. By putting to himself that he must die some time or another, and trying to make out what the last, horrible hour will be like. Rebecca's fantasies, this night, were scarcely more reasonable than his.

There was very little cause for fear of any kind: there was nothing of what some call sensational about her position. She was splendidly protected. Her father had done a very quaint thing, but she had practically checkmated all consequences. Still, she was in a state of nervous anxiety; and that anxiety became præcordial, and made her start with inexplicable terrors at every sound, and in passing every dark place. The physical effects of this nervousness was to make her knees tremble, and so cause her to walk unsteadily. The mental effects of it were still stranger.

For her anxiety began to take a single point as its culminating one. I do not think that this is by any means a rare case. A man confused in ruin, brought on by an accumulation of causes, will say, that he always knew that the beginning of it was some twenty-pound speculation. A man, dazed, stunned, and ruined by his wife's death, will attribute it to her swallowing a pin ten years before, after his neighbours had been hearing her bark her heart out all the winter, with tubercular disease of the lungs. Not well chosen as examples, possibly, but which will do. When people's minds are confused, they will pick out a cause for a particular form of anxiety, seldom the right one. Rebecca did on this occasion. The door behind Carry's bed—disused, and locked and bolted for so many years—was the point she fixed on as the most horrible and dangerous point in the house.

It communicated, as the reader may remember, between the used portion of the house and the unused. Since her mother's death, that back staircase, and all the adjacent part of the house, had been closed up, and had been a mystery and a horror to them. In very early days, as early as Rebecca could remember,

Carry used to have a habit of shrieking out suddenly, in the night, that some one was trying the door ; after which she would fly, in her nightgown, and leave Rebecca in the terror of death. And now, on this, to her, as she believed, supreme night, Rebecca, with a solitary candle, feebly lighting up the great room, stood before that door, and thought of what lay behind it.

What *was* there, locked up for twenty years, behind Carry's bed ? The skin of her head had a cold, nervous creeping in it (which is what the romantic people mean when they say that So-and-so's hair stood on end). She had a horror on her which was indescribable, as awful as the horror which occasionally precedes death ; it had a somewhat singular effect on her, for she moved Carry's bed out of the way, and looked at the door : and as she did so she says that the handle was softly turned, and some one pressed on the door from the outside.

One bolt, and the lock was all that opposed her. She had got into a state of horror by solitude and mystery. One simple physical movement, even of a door-handle, restored her to herself in an instant.

"We will get this through, my gentleman," she thought, with a low laugh : and suddenly and dexterously unlocked and unbolted the door, threw it open, and said, "Walk in, if you please."

No one was there. There was nothing before her but a dark passage, ending in darkness. The solitary glance at her feet showed her, not only that no one was there, but that no one had been there at all. The dust of twenty years, so lightly laid by the hand of ever busy Nature, was untouched. The foot of a spider might be traced on it, but not that of a man. The door had been tried by hands not of this world.

So her horror revived again tenfold ; but, in her obstinacy, she went on into the passage. And as she went she turned round, and saw the marks of her own footsteps in the dust. She was the first there. There were no other footsteps. The door had been tried by a ghost : and she went on, until she came to the head of the stairs, at the foot of which her mother had been picked up dead. And as she looked down them, her candle struck against something, and she saw that it was a halter hanging from the ceiling with a noose in it, ready for any man to put his head into. Had there been a corpse as ghastly as that of Berwick's over the trout stream in it, she could not have been more unutterably terrified. She fled swiftly, with some member of the other world's skinny hand entwined in her back hair, with a view of detaining her, and showing her a little more. But she

was strong and resolute ; and when she had got back to her bedroom, locked and bolted the door, put Carry's bed back, and, found her back hair unruffled, she began to believe that she had been making a fool of herself, and thought she would go and look at her friends.

Mr. Akin was what you may call a violent sleeper. Like the famous hackney-coachman of our youth, Tamaroo, whatever he did was done with fury and effusion. The frantic physical exertion which that young man had to go through in going to sleep would have ruined some constitutions. It was a University race to him going to sleep, and a ten-mile handicap (he starting from Scratch) for him to wake up again. At this time he was quiescent. He had taken off his velveteen coat, strangled himself with the arms round his neck, and suffocated himself by ramming his head into one of the hare-pockets. He likewise found it necessary to cross his left leg over his body, and hold on tight by his left boot with his right hand. It was impossible, in regarding this young man in his sleep, to avoid wondering what Mrs. Akin thought of it.

In a similar way, when one looked at Mr. Spicer at rest, one wondered whether Mrs. Spicer, in spite of accumulating wealth and good position, did not wish that there might be a few alterations in trifling details. For Mr. Spicer, though a quiet sleeper, lay on his back, and spread himself out in every possible direction, snoring magnificently. And, moreover, he talked in his sleep, very constantly, as people who sleep under constant expectation of being awakened always do. And Rebecca heard him say, as she watched them for a moment, "Jane's mother is a lie. The chaney and teaspoons was give to you by word of mouth."

This was realistic enough to do away with the folly of the deserted staircase ; her father's conduct dissipated her silly terror much more.

He was sitting up before his writing-table, examining papers and accounts. "Come in, old girl," he said. "Is there any news?"

"There is none yet, father," she said. "How are you to-night?"

"I am better, my love ; hard at work, you see."

"Pa," she said, "is it wise of you to work?"

"My dear," he said, "believe an old man. Mere work never hurt any one in this world. Just look at the lives of our public men. Those who have lived the longest are generally found to have worked the hardest. Work don't kill : excitement does.

This mechanical work which I am doing now is doing me more good than a doctor's shopfull of medicine. Where have you been ? ”

“ I have been frightened, father. I opened the door behind Carry's bed, and I got utterly terrified. There was a rope there with a noose to it, as though one was going to hang himself.”

“ You silly child, to frighten yourself with fancies, when there is real danger abroad. That is the rope of the old bell which hangs in the cupola.”

“ Gracious me ! ” said Rebecca. “ What a gaby I must have been not to think of *that*.”

“ Did you see many ghosts ? ” said Mr. Turner.

“ Heaps,” said Rebecca.

“ How many ? ”

“ A dozen or two. One of them turned the handle of the door, under my nose.”

“ A ghost, you think ? Be sure.”

“ Oh, yes, a ghost. The dust on the staircase was quite undisturbed.”

“ You are sure of that ? ”

“ Yes, I am quite sure.”

“ Because we must mind that they do not get in *that* way.”

“ I will put my sheets on Carry's bed, and sleep there,” said Rebecca.

“ I would if I were you,” said her father. “ Ho ! They will not come to-night.”

“ Will they come at all, father ? ”

“ They will most certainly come, one would fancy. But they will come soon, I should think. It is possible that they have been round the house to-night, and have seen us moving. Leave those two good fellows to sleep here for another night or so. We can reward them.”

Morning dawned, and there was no sign of any burglary. Rebecca had a consultation with Mr. Spicer and Mr. Akin before they went away.

“ My opinion is, Miss,” said Akin (and Spicer hung on his words, as on those of an expert), “ that they won't try it on until everything is quiet. Is it plate, Miss, or is it jewels ? ”

“ Neither,” said Rebecca. “ Papers.”

Spicer and Akin looked at one another, and laughed. “ Lord love you, Miss ; that accounts for the swell being in it. Papers, eh ? He'll get another professional hand ; we sprung one, and they will make a mess of it at last. Have you got a pistol, or any kind of firearm ? ”

"We have pistols; but I am a little afraid of them."

"Well, we will sleep here, turn and turn about, for a week. After that, if you hear anything, fire your pistol, and we will be with you. The little dog is your best alarm. I wish you and your father slept closer together. You trust to us and the little dog."

"Do you know anything about the part of our house which is shut up?" asked Rebecca.

"The part under the bell-tower, Miss? No, I don't, and I don't want to."

"Come with me, then," said Rebecca. "Good morning, Mr. Spicer, and a hundred thanks."

Akin left alone with Rebecca, exhibited a strange unwillingness to follow her. Still you would be utterly mistaken if you fancied that the cockney was neither chivalrous nor superstitious. He would sooner have fought any man within a mile, than have followed Rebecca. He would sooner have seen a man privately hanged than have gone into the disused part of the house, "where the accident was."

But she took him to her bedroom. "You see, Mr. Akin, you know more of this sort of thing than I do." (He knew more than he need have done.) "I am going to put my bed across this door. Just move that bed—will you?—and come with me."

Akin followed most unwillingly, though it was broad day. "Do you see these footsteps?" she asked, when they were in the passage; "they are mine last night. Do you see any others?"

"There have been no footsteps, but those of yourn for twenty years, Miss," said Akin, with emphasis. "Are you going any farther?"

"Yes," said Rebecca; "I want to see what is below."

And she led the way down the stairs, Akin following in the same state of mind as Shimei.

"You are quite right," she chattered, "the stairs are piled with dust. It was all my fancy last night about some one having got in here. There is not a footmark on the dust. See, here, at the bottom of the stairs, is a shoe with a blue rosette, I will have *that*."

"Come away, Miss, and leave it alone," said Akin, sharply; "there is ghostesses enough without yourn." For Akin had a shrewd suspicion that this shoe had been left there after the removal of Rebecca's mother from the very same place.

Rebecca got scared also, and came back with him somewhat

hurriedly, with the ghost feeling at her back. But she brought the shoe with her, too.

"If you put your bed across that door, Miss," said Akin, "as you propose, you stop 'em that way. I can't make out myself which way they will come. There is plenty if we leaves watching."

"Do you think they will come at all, Mr. Akin?" said Rebecca, confidentially.

"Will they come? I gather that there is forged papers. I gather that there is a swell with cash. I gather that the governor has those papers here. And that swell will come after those papers, with professional assistance, as sure as they apple trees will blossom next April. Sooner or later he will have those papers. Why, if he will get two years for 'em, it stands to reason that he will chance three (and it's seldom more for a first offence) for stealing 'em. He'll come fast enough."

"What *can* poor father do?" said Rebecca.

"That is easy enough to tell," said Akin; "let your pa write to that swell and say, 'Here, Tom,' and he says, 'you have been a-writing of other folk's names here, and I have got the writings. None of your gammon,' says your father. 'I've got your forged writing, and I'll Old Bailey you as sure as there is a Old Bailey.' Says your pa again, 'You have been a-hanging about my little place, and giving a world of trouble, keeping Akin and Spicer up all night, and my daughter and me sleeps habitual with Armstrong revolvers in consequence of your goings on. Why,' says your pa, 'you are a regular nuisance, that is about what you are. But I'll tell you what I'll do with you,' says your pa; 'you send me ten thousand pounds, notes of the Bank of England, and you shall have they documents. Not otherwise. There's been several rows,' says your pa, 'about convicted swells being kep' in the okum yard, at the 'Ouse of 'Crection, but Portland is bleak for delicate constutions in the spring months, and the beaks theirselves has been touched up in some of their speculations, and they mean Portland and nothing short.' That is what your father ought to say to this young swell. Your father, as a gentleman, would naturally dress it up, and draw it milder than an ignorant man like me. Still, I wish the plant was mine. I'd have the old girl to Ramsgate every year, if it was."

"It might be yours," said Rebecca, suddenly, with that strange heedlessness which was the great fault in her.

"Don't say such dreadful things as those, Miss," said Akin, turning pale; "that ain't worthy of you."

"What have I said?" said Rebecca, aghast.

"What was wrote in that book, Miss, which you give us, about Charles Steward?"

"The Pretender, yes. What have I said?"

"It is wrote down in that book, Miss, that Charles Steward, who had been up to some game or other, I never made out what, had thirty thousand pounds set on his head. And he was loose among the Highlanders (a bad lot) and not one of them gave the pleece the office on him, not one out of all them—not for thirty thousand pound. And you would rank me lower than a common Highland drover."

"Dear Akin, I did not mean it. I spoke only in compliment. I *know* you would never turn on us. Please don't be angry."

There was a child in heaven who had left her footprints behind her, which prevented Jim ever being angry with Rebecca. Still, she had heedlessly touched his honour. There is a mass of potential chivalry in this queer nation of ours, to which, under our present military *régime*, we do not get. I wish I had the Queen's commission to raise a regiment. Kingsley's Foot should be as terrible as my grand-uncle's, Kingsley's Horse. And equally queer in their antecedents, I doubt. I should trouble Lord Shaftesbury for about two dozen from Field Lane to begin with.

To Rebecca the next fortnight was actually worse than any time since the breaking of the Philpott bank. Her father had told her that the house would be broken into for the forged papers, which was one evidence, and Akin, a most experienced man, had confirmed his opinion emphatically. But she believed in it day after day less and less, and after Mr. Spicer and Mr. Akin had taken to sleep at home she was quite comfortable. They were all wrong together. She had never really believed in it at all.

The weather might have been better, for even in this part of the metropolis it howled and raved. St. Swithin had been unpropitious, and the land was deluged and drowned. Still, Mr. Morley was possibly safe, and wind was better than burglary.

"Pa," she said, one night, "they are not going to rob and murder us at all."

"I am glad to hear it, my dear; for I am getting very ill."

"Shall I sleep in your room, pa?"

"No. Let me have the little dog. That is a very dear little dog, Rebecca."

"You can have the dog, pa. She is very nice. Let me sleep in your room, dear."

"No, no," said Mr. Turner. "I am well enough, only I am very ill indeed."

"You have not been to the office for ten days, pa ; you are not well."

"I am going to sell out of the business, my love. It was too much for me."

"And the papers ? " said Rebecca.

"You will hear about *them*," said he. And they went to their respective beds.

Rebecca, with her head across the mysterious door, went to sleep and dreamt of absolutely nothing. She told Alfred Morley in after times that she never dreamt less in her life. After, as it seemed to her, a good night's sleep, she was awakened by what she thought was morning. But it was not morning at all. It was the light of a lantern on her face, held by a man with a black mask on, and two others behind him.

"Miss Turner," said this man, "we must trouble you to get up. If you speak we shall use violence."

"How on earth did you get in ? " thought Rebecca. "This your burglary, is it ? *I'll manage your business*," she added to herself. "Mr. Philpott, you have no possible business in a lady's bedroom. If you only came after your own forgeries we should not care ; but there are others. If you will retire, I will go to my father, and *your* rascalities shall be put into your own hand."

Young Philpott took the key from the door without one solitary word, and locked the door on the outside. The instant he did so, Rebecca was out of bed. She wrapped herself in her dressing-gown, and pulling her bed aside, unlocked and unbolted the door, ran barefooted to the rope of the bell, which hung in the turret.

Philpott heard the door unlocked, and ran in. But he was too late ; the pluck and nerve of that solitary and defenceless girl had beaten his well-laid plot. The girl who was to have been intimidated, and held as hostage until the necessary papers were got from her father had passed through their net. Instead of cowering among them in terror, she was pulling resolutely at a rope, and sending forth upon the night air clang, clang, clang, in a terrible staccato, which in old times would have brought thirty thousand men out of St. Antoine, and even now would people it with ghosts, if there were a St. Antoine ; a tocsin which promised to raise Walham Green, if not St. Antoine.

Her enemies were utterly beaten. Philpott (no fool) was prepared for both pluck and obstinacy ; for such rapidly acting dexterity he was not prepared. The girl's brains were keener than his. He was unused to crime, and accustomed to music. When he heard his burglary proclaimed at midnight in an amorphous staccato (I am sorry to use bad language), he fled.

When he thought of the courage and dexterity through which Rebecca had outwitted him, he fled faster for mere shame. The bell, disused and dumb for twenty years, went on clang, clang, clang, clang, proclaiming him to the world as a ruined gamester, who had staked all to keep his wife's respect, and had lost. The poor fellow fled away.

Lost through the courage and dexterity of an idle girl, who was going to be married to a Methodist parson—(if he came back); but who had had messages from the sea which gave her sailors' courage and sailors' recklessness. And she still went on ringing that horrible bell. And if he had gone back and cut her throat it would have been much the same. He had met with a nature more powerful than his own. He was beaten. His wife must know all now, and he was desperate, for he, potential felon as he was, did not trust her.

One hardly knows sometimes whether Providence is kind or unkind. In the end, it seems to me (and to others) that Providence always acts for the best. When you come to mere details, any one can say Providence should have done otherwise. One would say to those who question the government of this world, that you must *wait*. One would say to them, *par exemple*, was not the 2nd December the seal of Democracy, not of wax, but of iron.

I have only a very poor little illustration to offer for my pretentious theory. It gets infinitesimally small as one looks at it. Still, granting that the little dog Mab was not brought into the world for nothing, you must grant this.

When Rebecca began clanging the bell, Mab began to bark, and aroused Mr. Turner, who put on his trousers, and got hold of his pistol. Coming out he met young Philpott in a mask, but knew him, and challenged him by name, holding his pistol towards him. Philpott, in his desperation, fired at him and wounded him, and Mr. Turner fell at the head of the stairs.

The whole district was gathered round now. Akin and Spicer were in and had Philpott and his accomplices in hand very quickly. Turner only said, "Let them go before the police come, and stop that bell. Where is Rebecca?"

Akin, the dexterous, assisted by Spicer, carried the captured men through Rebecca's bedroom to get down the back stairs. On their way they came on Rebecca ringing away as hard as ever.

"For heaven's sake, Miss, stop that noise," said Akin; "the parish engine's in the lane. Let us get these folks out this way. Is there any road this way?"

There was, it seemed, and Philpott and his friends were got

out. There was nothing saved from the bankruptcy save his wife's fortune, and she knows nothing of his midnight meeting with Rebecca. To pleasanter matters.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TURNER SNUFFS THE SEA WIND.

THE neighbourhood was aroused, and there were six engines in the lane. The parish engine, anxious to assert itself against the office engines, played upon the house for a little time, and then stopped and drivelled into imbecility. The other engines went home smoking pipes, and wondering why they had been sent for, when there was no fire. The policeman had come to see what was the matter, and had been promptly turned out by Rebecca. The lane had gone to bed, on the theory that Mr. Turner had been took by his conscience in the night, and had rung the bell for prayers. There were more unconscious lies told that night, than there are twice a year, and in the midst of it all Mr. Turner lay, severely wounded through the deltoid, and Rebecca minding him.

She had got singularly emphatic all of a sudden.

"Pa, you don't want a doctor from here?"

"No. All this must be kept quiet."

"You will die if you don't have one. Will you let me move you to Limehouse?"

"That is the best," he said, "good girl. We must take the safe."

"Lor bless you, yes, dear pa. We will take *that* fast enough. Bother the safe, I wish it was chucked in the water. You will have to move in an hour, pa."

"I wish I was well out of it," said he, "with the safe."

"You will be well out of it directly," she said. "Keep quiet."

She ran down to the livery stables near by, and ordered a fly, to take her father away in half an hour's time. It was there punctually, and she hurried him in.

She had tied everything she could find tight round his deltoid, and it is not a very difficult wound to staunch. He was very quiet, in that lethargic state which comes from loss of blood, and he cared nothing about anything.

She looked back on the old house until they turned the lane.

And she said, "There is an end of *that*, thank heaven." He did not care at all, "Where are you taking me?" he said once.

"Limehouse," she answered. "9, Pilot Terrace. Keep quiet, or the hæmorrhage will come on again."

"Where is Morley?" he asked, as they were going along Bird Cage Walk.

"At sea," she said. "Keep quiet. Everything depends on your keeping absolutely quiet and trusting implicitly to me. Your wound is a severe one, and will be shortly followed by fever. You must be perfectly quiet."

When they were passing Tower Hill, he said, "You are a brave, good girl, Rebecca, where did you get your courage?"

"From Hetty," said Rebecca.

"Where did you see her then?" said Mr. Turner.

"I have never seen her," said Rebecca, "and I don't suppose I ever shall. But she is Alfred's daughter. And I have made a daughter for Alfred, whom I suppose does not exist at all."

"Talk to me, darling," said Turner. "My own Rebecca, talk to me, for my wound is aching, and I am going to die. Let me hear you talk. What do you conceive about this Hetty?"

"Give me your wounded arm, father, and put it over my breast; lay your head on my breast, and if you keep quite quiet, I will tell you what I have imagined Hetty to be. If I am wrong, do not undeceive me."

"Hetty had no mother. Some girls have none. I had none."

"Hetty was a Radical and a Dissenter in her heart. For no person is a Radical or a Dissenter, except from sentiment."

The wounded man said, "Radicals and Dissenters form their opinion on pure reason."

"Hold your tongue, pa, or I will knock you. Hetty found herself, as a Radical and a Dissenter, bound hand and foot, by Radical and dissenting haybands. And she broke them."

"And we all wished she had been at the bottom of Jordan when she did so," said the wounded man.

"But she was right in what she did, pa."

"No she wasn't," said he. "She is one of the most thundering fools on the face of the earth. I never heard of the girl doing any good, that a costermonger's wife could not have done. She has smashed her father's connection in our sect, and forced him abroad, for which you have to thank her; because I am going to die, and you will be all alone until he comes back."

"But she is good," said Rebecca.

"Many fools are," was the only reply she got.

Hetty had been tried as a subject of conversation and had

utterly failed. Their silence towards one another was barely become oppressive, when they were at Morley's house.

Very few words were necessary from Rebecca to tell her story. They were at home at once. Mr. Morley's landlady was easily aroused, and it was a bright summer morning, with the river gaily dancing on among the ships towards the sea, when Mr. Turner stepped out of his carriage, and looked about him.

"Hush!" he said. "It is good for us to be here. What a lovely place to die in!"

"To get well in, I think you mean, father," said Rebecca.

"No I don't," said he. "There is but little business left me to do. That done I will go to sleep. I am sick of it all."

CHAPTER XXIX.

PILOT TERRACE.

A TIME now came, which Rebecca has separated from all times in her life. Such a time may come again, she says, but it has not yet.

Ceaseless activity and care, ceaseless employment, ceaseless anxiety, ceaseless thought for others. A strange mixture of melancholy waiting for death, and for life.

And all about and around, golden summer weather, bright water, moving ships, distant Kentish hillsides basking in the sun. The tomb at Walham Green had given up the soul so long imprisoned there, and it had escaped not to useless idleness but to anxious usefulness.

"As I saw him fading away, day after day, before my eyes, I loved him more and more, but, believing that he was going to his God, I do not think I was unhappy. I do not think I could be unhappy under any circumstances at Pilot Terrace."

The girl was not talking nonsense when she said this. Inbred in her nature was a love for brightness and motion, without which she was petulant and miserable. Hereditary proclivities are one of the few things which are absolutely certain; in the greatest number of instances, the sire sets his seal upon the race, but in the case of a very strong will in the mother, she may compete with her mate in the formation of characteristics. Rebecca's mother coming of a stock which had been used to light gaiety and

music for centuries, had left this want with Rebecca, as her legacy—the fortune on which she was to exist in the horrible prison at Walham Green. In addition to this precious legacy of her mother's, she had got from her father not only the virtue, determination, but the vice, obstinacy (as Carry well knew). And furthermore, in addition to it all she had got—*God* knows where—I do not, some bright clear spark of the divine nature, which made her very errors and indiscretions lovely.

Poor child. What if she ran away to Broadstairs, thereby violating a law never mentioned so far south as, and of course never dreamt of, in Philistia: she was very sorry afterwards, and she took her most discreet and excellently-beloved old nurse. Poor old Rebecca, when she found her duty ready to her hand, she did it. Have we all done so?

She wanted light and beauty. She had seen dimly in old time the Popish worship with her mother; and up to the time when she had run away to Broadstairs and seen the sea, that was the only beautiful thing she had seen. There was movement, light, brightness of colour; the tinsel is as good as the gold to a child. She had dimly recollected it, in the long hours of Puritan seclusion at Walham Green. How long, oh my Puritan brothers, will you make religion hideous to one-half at least of your children? think, in these days, when the nation is becoming educated to a rough love of light and beauty, what mischief you are doing, not to us, but to yourselves.

Rebecca says that the first pretty thing she saw when she was grown up was young Hartop the sailor. She always declares to Hetty that she was desperately in love with Hartop for a week, and that he used her disgracefully. However, Rebecca was worthy of seeing something more than a pretty sailor. She was capable of understanding real beauty, of the very highest form.

Mr. Morley. I would have made Mr. Morley a duke if I could, only for the simple fact, that he was a Dissenting minister, and considered unsound and unsafe even in that capacity. How many times that brown sailor-like face, that grizzled hair, and those steady brown eyes had passed before Rebecca's retina, before they were fixed on it for ever, I do not know. But they were fixed there firmly enough now.

He was the first man, practically, who had ever introduced her to real light and beauty. She might have loved Hartop, but Hartop was for Hetty; and with her keen intellect, she quickly found out this: that Hartop, brave, glorious, beautiful, was not so brave or so glorious as brown-faced Mr. Morley, with the

slightly grizzled hair. "I would not change with Hetty," she said.

However, he was at sea, and she was all alone, and her father was dying, and she declares that she was not unhappy at this quaint time, which lasted long. And that makes my explanation quite good enough for my little story.

She did well in every detail now. Quick, keen wits, once roused by love, seem to do without experience almost magically. The higher nature seems to descend to the level of the lower, intellect is assisted by instinct, Cupido by Eros (a thinking friend of the writer's says that I am utterly wrong, and that the love of the child for the parent is reflected. I give him this opportunity of adding to the amount of human knowledge). Love and sympathy supplied experience. If all Sisters and trained nurses had had a conference with Gamp and Prig, they could have done no more for Mr. Turner than Rebecca did, with slight hints about details to the landlady.

I resume my story. She put his bed in the bow-window so that he could see the river and the ships. The landlady saw after him while Rebecca went out in the early morning until she could find a doctor. There were a dozen doctors close by, and the landlady recommended her to one, and Rebecca knocked him up.

He put a head out of window, and said—

"What do you want?"

And Rebecca said, "*He* won't do. Papa would never stand him."

Then she was going to pull at the bell of the next doctor's, when the door was suddenly opened, and a fat gentleman of fifty said to her, "The advertisement said four o'clock and it is half-past. Come in." Whereupon she marched off; and thought "You won't do, my gentleman."

"Bother the doctors," she said. "I wish—I beg your pardon, Sir," for she had run up against a queer little man with one leg shorter than the other, coming round a corner.

"Go away from me," he said, waving her off, "you most ridiculous and incautious young woman. I am one saturation of scarlet fever from head to foot. I have been attending a scarlet fever case, and I have pulled my pretty ones through. There are between eighty and ninety thousand sporules on your fine velvet cloak at this moment, chuck it over your little sister's bed to keep her warm; and then say it was me."

"You will do," said Rebecca emphatically.

"Well I suppose so," said the little gentleman; "what do you want?"

"Pistol wound."

"My heavens!" he said, turning his queer shrewd little face up to hers.

"Sir," she answered.

"Ho!" he said. "Ha! aristocratic or long shore?"

"Neither. But mysterious."

"Young man dead?"

"No, but faint," said Rebecca.

"Ha. I'll get these fever clothes off and come directly. What is the house?"

"9, Pilot Terrace."

"Morley's? Yes, quite so. You are Miss Turner. I warned Morley that he was flying his kite too high. I told him that there would be bloodshed if he sought a wife among the Aristocrats. And my words have come true, you see. Well, you are a wise young lady in choosing him. I am a Romanist myself: Dr. Slop, you know; Hey? Don't know your secret; of course not. I knew they would shoot some one over you.*

"That has nothing to do with me," said Rebecca.

"Of course not," said Dr. Barnham. "Lord bless you, we know. Of course not. Bless you! call us Jesuits at one moment, and deny us common knowledge of the world at another. I'll change my fever clothes and come in."

The whole story of Mr. Turner's pistol wound was carefully explained to Dr. Barnham by at least three people; but he never believed it. He only said, "Yes! yes! quite so. We are men of the world, we Catholics."

But Barnham was a great acquisition to them. He treated Mr. Turner with great skill and *bonhomie*; and Mr. Turner loved him and waited for his coming. Both men were intensely in earnest; Barnham a violent Ultramontane, Turner a violent Protestant. They used to argue furiously, the Bishop of Rome was alternately the old man of Rome on Mr. Turner's side, and something which one does not care to write about another human being, on Dr. Barnham's. These two gentlemen used mutually to assure one another of the utter impossibility of the other's ultimate salvation, in a way which I dare not produce, not believing that God's mercy depends on a few details, as these men did. But they liked one another the better for all their quarrelling: and this quaint little Romanist was one of the brightest things in their new short life.

Turner would be in the bow-window, looking at the ships going to and fro, and would invent arguments against the

doctor. And he would say to Rebecca, "Come, old girl, give a hand next time, and we will smash him and put an end to him."

And Rebecca would laugh, and cower down by her father; and say, "I won't say one word against him. And you know that you love him in your heart."

He was indeed the only educated friend they had. Mr. Turner was quietly falling away day after day, and finding his time getting short, he wrote notes to several people calling on them to come.

Lord Ducetoy was the first. "How de do, my lord," said Turner. "I have summoned up the phantom."

CHAPTER XXX.

LORD DUCETOY'S PROPOSALS.

HERE first she began to learn the artistic value and beauty of tones, crossed indefinitely by other tones, perfectly harmonious, and sometimes without incident. At times of the night, when the tide was even brimming full, and she was watching, she would open the window, and hear the sounds of the river, all melted into one, and assisted by the dull undertone of the city. At first, in her ignorance and her cockneyishness, she had thought that the city was the sea; and that the eternal crawling hum, waxing and waning in the night, was the crawling of the breakers upon the shore; but Lord Ducetoy, standing in the balcony with her one evening, laughed at her for thinking so, and pointed out her mistake.

"But water runs down hill, my lord; and the water is running that way."

"My fair cockney cousin, do you not notice that it runs the other way sometimes?"

Yes, it was so. Her beloved sea was further off than she thought, and it was silent to her. He was right. She had mistaken the music of the hated city for the dim, far-heard melody of the free sea.

"Do you ever sail upon the sea, my lord?" she said.

"Not at present, my lady," he answered. "Your good father has given me the means of keeping a yacht, and when the king

has his own again perhaps you will sail with me. Have you heard from Mr. Morley ? ”

“ Not one word. Nor from Hartop or Hetty, either. I am all alone, with my father.”

“ Except for me,” he said.

“ Except for you,” she answered, looking straight at him ; “ exactly. It is very kind of you to come here and see us.”

“ Now, Rebecca, I want to have a serious talk with you. I shall offend you deeply, I know ; but a man must speak what is in him, or—— ”

“ Hold his tongue.”

“ Exactly. I am not going to hold mine. Rebecca, do you know that I love you heartily ? ”

“ I thought you did, and I am very glad. I suppose there is not the wildest chance of my ever seeing Lady Ducetoy ? ”

“ Not if you go to the South Sea Islands. But, Rebecca, do you love me ? ”

“ Very much indeed.”

Dead stop. Rebecca had some dim idea that he was going to make a fool of himself ; and *she* was not going to help him.

“ I suppose,” he said, in a very awkward manner, “ that no one was ever placed in a more difficult position than I am at this present moment.”

Rebecca merely stood and looked at him.

“ You see, I don’t know how to begin.”

“ Well, then, don’t begin,” said Rebecca. “ No one wants you to.”

“ Yes, but you don’t know. I have a great personal admiration for you, and I am your cousin, and I think you an uncommonly gentlemanly old fellow, one of the most splendid creatures, and one of the most admirably formed ladies I have ever met. Now, cousin Rebecca, I am under terribly great obligations to you for your gallantry. I don’t know what you father has done for me, or how his affairs are. Tell me one thing ; what money shall you have when you marry Mr. Morley ? ”

Rebecca gave a gasp of relief ; she was afraid that he was going to talk some sentimental nonsense. “ I don’t suppose we shall have any,” she said. “ Hagbut has drained away pa’s cash for Carry’s settlements. I should have liked to take him money, and yet I shouldn’t.”

“ I don’t understand,” said Lord Ducetoy.

“ Can’t you see that, cousin ? I should like to take him money, because I should like him to have money for his works and his charities, for which he lives. Yet, I should also like to

go to him, cousin, saying, 'You chose me, and here I am, without one penny. Will you take me still?' And he would. And he would love me better without the money than with it. For if I had all Carry's money it would only be a cloud between us. He, the noblest man in all the world, has honoured poor little me, with all my indiscretions and errors, above all women in the world. And I would sooner go to him, *in formā pauperis*. You are talking to an attorney's daughter, you know."

"But Rebecca, do you mean to say, that you would sooner marry a mere Dissenting clergyman without money than with. It is totally incredible to me why you should marry him at all: but without the power over him, which money could give! Are you mad?"

"Not in the least. When you find in your order as fine a gentleman as Alfred Morley, I shall be glad to hear from you."

"He must be an exception."

"Of course he is," said she. "There is another exception coming to plague pa. Stay and see the other exception, and finish what you were going to say."

"Well, Rebecca, I only wanted to know this. If money should run short with you, will you accept some from me?"

"Certainly," said Rebecca. "I am very much obliged to you. Some of your money may come in very useful, if pa has been drawn dry by *him*, and if we have not got any of it. We should be very glad of some of yours under those circumstances."

"A few thousands," began Lord Ducetoy.

"Thousands," said Rebecca, laughing. "If you can find us £150 some day, it is quite as much as we are fit to be trusted with. Don't give Alfred Morley more. He would only give it away. Tell me. Is this offer of money all you were going to say to me when you began?"

"It was all, indeed."

"Bless me, I thought you were going to talk nonsense to me. You were not, were you?"

"I assure you, Rebecca, that I had not the least intention of doing so."

"Quite sure?"

"I am not quite sure that you are sane in dreaming of such a thing. Come, you are the very last person on the face of the earth that I would dare to talk nonsense to. How Mr. Morley got into his present position with you I don't know. I would not have dared to say as much as he has dared. Cousin, I only wanted to try and help you, and you are so very quaint

and *emportée* that I had to beat about the bush. I was a little in love with you once, but I have quite got over any little sentimental feeling of that sort."

They had come into the upper room out of the balcony as he said this, and she said, "Bend down your head, my lord." And he bent it down to her and she kissed him, saying, "You are a good man, cousin, and we understand one another."

And if any one thinks she was wrong I happen to disagree with them.

Since Eve kissed her firstborn (unfortunately for the illustration, *Cain*, I believe, unless some new State papers have been grubbed out at Fetter Lane or Simancas, to the contrary) no purer kiss was given or received than Rebecca gave to Lord Ducetoy. And he, being a gentleman, knew it.

"Now let us come downstairs," she said. "You have spoken of Mr. Morley as a Dissenting minister. As if they were all alike. As if you Nobles were all alike." And she gave illustrations. "Come and see what I have escaped, will you?"

CHAPTER XXXI.

BREAKING WINDOWS.

Why do people break windows? Some do it to get locked up; but I do not mean them. Why do people who do not want to be locked up at all, habitually break windows? Who breaks windows? Every one. You and I, and Rebecca. You and I are wise people, and hold our hands from a window, unless we can get something by breaking it. Now Rebecca was a fool, and never could keep her hands off a window. Morley said she was nearly as bad as Hetty.

There is something very exasperating to a certain kind of mind in a smooth square of plate glass. One does not demand much, one only demands what nature will give, at any point, at any time of the year. Half and quarter tints, melting into one another, yet making a great harmony, and an "arrangement," as great as Turner's Heidelberg. That was all Rebecca wanted, though she had never seen it, and could not tell you exactly what she did want. She knew, however, that plate glass with gas behind it, exasperated her. So she was given to window breaking.

One says she had never learnt the subtle interminable delight, and beauty of half tints. It is not true. She had learnt it from Mr. Morley's grizzled head, and brown face. And now she came downstairs with Lord Ducetoy, of the prairies, thinking about Morley of the sea : of men with an inconceivable number of half and quarter loves about them : and she found Hagbut, and Carry ; plate-glass and gas. A window, a bald, shallow window. She instantaneously broke it, with the first stone she could find, and you can generally find a stone if you stoop down.

It was very naughty of her. I offer no defence. I am not bound to carry a heroine through everything. Still Hagbut and Carry, sitting in a row, drinking tea, and smiling, were not calculated to make any one the less petulant.

"Where have you been, Rebecca?" said her father.

"Upstairs, with Lord Ducetoy."

"Did you hear Mr. Hagbut come in?"

"Yes, I heard him."

"Where were you?"

"In the upper passage, kissing Lord Ducetoy."

"Becky, old girl," said Mr. Turner. "Don't say such things."

"Why not? You ought to tell the truth, ought you not. And I was kissing Lord Ducetoy on the stairs."

Hagbut said, very quietly, "For my part, not being a gentleman myself, I am uneasy in the company of even an ordinary gentleman, still more so in the company of a nobleman. However, by your confession of having kissed his lordship on the stairs, my elephantine awkwardness is somewhat easier to bear. About the outrageous impropriety of the thing happening at all, and of Rebecca telling about it afterwards, I say nothing. But from all I can hear, two very good people have kissed one another, and are not ashamed of it either."

Lord Ducetoy laughed aloud. "It was *her*, you know, Padre, mind that. *She* kissed *me* in the passage. You believe me, I am sure."

"My lord, I am bound to believe the statement of any hereditary legislator, the more particularly in this case, because I am perfectly certain that you would never have obtained the favour on your own account."

Carry sat utterly aghast. Lord Ducetoy had kissed Becky in the passage, and they were all making fun of it. Her husband and her father were laughing, and Becky and Lord Ducetoy were smiling. *She* began to cry.

Hagbut did not attend to her at first, for his eyes were fixed on

Mr. Turner. He turned suddenly on Carry and ordered her to run for the doctor.

"Rebecca, look at your father," he said. "Good heavens and earth! it can't be so, while we have been chattering nonsense here. Go away, Rebecca, go and fetch the landlady, or the surgeon, or the fire-engine, or some one. My lord, things have gone wrong here. Are you afraid of death?"

"Is he dead?" said Lord Ducetoy.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE GREAT HETTY MYSTERY CLEARED UP.

POOR old Turner. He was dead enough. The life, fierce at first in its vitality, nay, some said wild, had come to an almost eventless end. He had died in his chair quite quietly laughing. A nobleman and a Dissenting minister were carrying his body to a sofa, and a scared, beautiful daughter, looking on death now for the first time, was holding the candle. That was the end and finish of it all.

"Worth?" Yes. "Silence?" Beyond that of most. "Ambition?" Yes. "Money?" Enough. "Love?" Aye, and hate too. We shall never know *that* story. "Respect in the world?" More than most. "Capabilities of enjoyment?" Very great, but never exercised. "Religion?" That is no matter here, just now, when Ducetoy the Puseyite, and Hagbut the Dissenter, are carrying him to the sofa. One of his shoes fell off and Rebecca picked it up and tried to put it on.

"It is of no use to do that," said Lord Ducetoy.

No use to put on his shoe. Not one bit. There had come an end and finish. The man as known to sight and touch, was utterly gone, with all his works and ways, bearing the consequences with him. The very tree in front of the house would last longer than he. A few days and the very image must be hidden in the earth. Shall we ever dare to appreciate the memory of death? Shall we ever dare to deduce the great future of the soul, from the contempt which our good God shows towards this poor pretty toy of a body which He has lent us?

He was *dead*. Shut your eyes for only one minute, and think

or it. At one time all a man's schemes and plots, honourable and other, must come to an end. The man, as you knew him, must be quickly put out of the way and hidden; the man exists no more. Who can wonder at Religion being the one thing which people are most furious about? That terror of utter annihilation which produced the slightly illogical Phædo, is the basis of all religions. There is only one tribe in the world, so far as I know, who disbelieve in a future state, and it would be unpolite to name them.

However, Turner, with all his sins and virtues, was, to his scared daughter, no more than a heap of bones and flesh. No wrong which one had ever done the other could be righted *now*. It was all over. She had no means of believing that they would ever meet again. Her religion denied her the shocking and yet beautifully tender superstition of masses for his soul; she had been trained in too sharp a school to believe that divine mercy could be bought with music and candles. She only thought that her father had done his best, and that God would have mercy on him. In her terror, in her dumb, stunned grief, she would have asked even Hagbut about her father's future; but his people had told her so many cruel things, that she feared he might say that her father was in hell, and she also very much feared that she should believe it; and so she merely hung round his body tenderly, without one solitary tear as yet, and moaned to herself, "Alfred! Alfred!"

But Morley was far away on the wild sea. There was no hope from him; and it was no use lying on the floor beside the corpse, which was on the sofa, and saying at intervals, in a whisper, ghostly from want of hope, "Pa!" That was obviously no good whatever. All kinds of methods have been tried for speaking with the dead, but I have never heard of one which has succeeded.

Moaning inarticulately with all the weight of what might have been between her and that poor corpse weighing on her more and more as the minutes went on, she lay dumb and tearless. Lord Ducetoy and Mr. Hagbut, with that delicacy of manhood, which is nearly as fine as that of womanhood, left her alone, and stayed about the house whispering. Carry had been hurried out of the house (being in an interesting condition), not having the least idea that her father was dead. What to do with the moaning, tearless Rebecca was becoming a puzzle to Lord Ducetoy. Hagbut was perfectly calm, and only said, "Wait, my lord. She will have faces round her soon which she will know. I was to preach here to-night, and I have ordered some women of my communion, who are come to hear me, to come to her."

Rebecca had nearly moaned herself to sleep, on the hard floor,

when she felt a kind, gentle arm round her waist, and heard a very gentle voice say, "My love, come with me. Get up."

"I will be very obedient," said Rebecca. "I was wrong to go to Broadstairs. Now that death is here I know it. Alfred Morley has forgiven me, and pa forgave me too. I will go to Walham Green, and ask forgiveness of all. I am sure even Miss Soper would forgive me now."

"My sweet child, my own bonny girl," said old Soper; "what have I to forgive? You have got to forgive an ill-tempered old maid, driven wild by girls. Come away, dear, and scold me. See here is Mrs. Russel; you will come with us, won't you?"

"Pretty sweetheart," said Mrs. Russel; "come with us. We never hit it off together yet, but we will do so for the future. Becky, my pretty love, come and lie down."

All the well written or well talked sentimentality in the world could never have had the effect which the kindness of these two old women had on Rebecca. The rock was smitten, and the tears came forth.

Soper and Russel behaved gloriously. Soper never yielded an inch in her principles. Rebecca had once done a thing which if done too often would entirely ruin the ladies' school business, for which Soper had a sentimental regard, seeing that she had made a modest competence out of it. About the Broadstairs business Soper nailed her colours to the mast; but on all other points she gave way, and turned out the thoroughly good fellow which she really was. Russel and she stayed in the house until the end, and as they never got on from one week's end to another without a squabble, they naturally had one here.

Russel said one evening at tea that Rebecca would be all alone now. Mr. Hagbut was not likely to let Carry see much of her, and she would be alone.

"A good job too," said Soper. "I hate Carry."

"She is a well-conducted girl," said Russel.

"Her sister is worth ten of her," said Soper, the experienced. "Don't talk nonsense. If Rebecca was a barrack-master's daughter (you don't know what that means, I suppose?) there would never be a scandal about her."

Russel was so used to getting her old ears boxed by Soper, that she submitted as usual, and said, "You know best, my dear, of course. That Morley's daughter, that Hetty, will be home soon, and she will be thrown against Rebecca. I suppose you will be saying next that you approve of *that*."

"Yes, I shall," said Soper. "I have retired from business, and sold my connection. I'll say *that*. There are girls and girls,

and we in our trade don't study that enough. Yes, I'll say *that*," said Soper, rubbing her nose. "I don't want to injure the woman's business who bought my school; but I will say as much as *that*."

"Don't be angry, my dear," said Russel.

"I shall, if I choose. Morley's daughter is the best companion for Morley's wife."

"After what she has done?" cried Russel.

"What *has* she done?" asked Soper.

"Outraged every law of respectability," said Mrs. Russel, stoutly. "Oh, Lord! look there."

It was only Rebecca in her dressing-gown, looking certainly very ghostly.

"My dear friends," she said, "is there anything wrong?"

"Yes," said Russel, "Miss Soper is backing up Hetty."

"And I don't see why I should not," said Soper; "the girl was plagued out of her life, and rebelled. Morley had not any money to give her, and she went honestly and bravely away to get money to keep herself and to help him. And she went as stewardess on board a Scotch steamer. And she went as stewardess on board an American steamer, and she got money, and she got prestige for business habits, and she prospered. She is a noble soul, that is about what she is, and those who decry her are fools."

"Fool is a strong word," said Mrs. Russel. "Come, tell the whole truth."

"About her shipwrecks? About her heroism?"

"You know what I mean," said Russel.

"About the *Lord Clyde*? Yes, I will tell Becky about that. Now, my dear, you shall have the very whole of it. Hetty, long a disgrace to our respectable connection, in consequence of her—a minister's daughter—lowering herself so far as to go to sea as a stewardess. In our connection, my dear, as in some others, we seldom lower ourselves so far as to marry into the ministry. Mr. Spurgeon has pointed out that. But we expect our ministers' daughters to keep their rank. Hetty Morley violated our traditions, and did worse."

"I am sure she did no wrong," said Rebecca.

"Oh, didn't she?" said Soper, now venomous. "If there was a Northern sympathiser, in this world, it was Alfred Morley. If any sect in Catholic Europe was more united than ours on the subject of hatred to the slave-owners of the South, it was ours. Hartop, the man to whom she was engaged, was an open favourer of the Northern States. What did Hetty do? Flew in the face of her father, her lover, and her connection, and ran the blockade into Charleston."

"Is *that* all she has done?" asked Rebecca.

"Enough too," said Russel, now very angry indeed. "Disgraced herself by taking service as a stewardess; and then, on sentimental grounds, assisting Jezebels of slavery into that stronghold of abomination, Charleston."

I believe that it was the late great and good President Lincoln who first said, that you could do nothing with a woman when her back was up. You could do nothing with Soper now. Her major premiss was "Humbug," and she never got to her minor, and dropped grammar in her fury.

"That *Lord Clyde*," she said, "was took for blockade running. And Hetty Morley was stewardess aboard of her, in the *Clyde*. And there comes two ladies, one big with child. And they says, mutually about one another, 'My husband's killed,' one on 'em says; 'and hers,' pointing to the one in the family way, 'he is wounded.' 'Do you know the danger?' says the skipper. 'I am uncommon deep this time, and they have built a gunboat to catch me: and I doubt I can't take ladies.'"

"Stop your story, Miss Soper," said Mrs. Russel. "It's too much for her."

Rebecca, perfectly white, and a little wild, was staring at Miss Soper. The experienced Soper looked at her one instant and went on.

"It won't hurt you to tell. It will draw your mind from what is upstairs. The skipper said, 'I can't take ladies.' They says, 'But us. Think on us,' they said. 'For the memory of your mother take us.' And the one whose husband was alive, said, 'She can't see him again, but I may see my man.' And the skipper said, 'You two will never get through without some other woman. I expect to be took this time. And our stewardess is ordered not to go. I won't trust myself with you without her.' And he asked Hetty; and Hetty said 'Willing.' And she went; and all I say is, that God went with her. That is what Hetty did."

"Did the two slave-owning ladies get safe in?" asked Rebecca.

"Yes," said the violent emancipationist Soper, triumphantly; "they did, thank God."

"Thank God, also," said Rebecca. "Tell us the rest of what Hetty did."

"Not much," said Soper, "except behaving like an English woman. The *Lord Clyde* was deep, and touched the ground under a battery, and she was wounded in the face by the splinter of a shell; but she stood to her work plucky until the very last."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WAITING BY THE TIDE.

THE little tale is nearly told. A little more trouble. A little more heart gnawing, weary waiting, and our bold wild hawk will have been purged from the fault, mainly brought on her by her old unsuitable life, and our once wild peregrine shall be tamed. She shall stoop to the master's wrist directly; no lure needed any longer. No need for jesses, hood, or bell; she shall perch upon his wrist, I promise you, and then she shall spread her pretty wings and fly away across the sea towards the morning.

I tried hard to make you like her from the very first; but she was a naughty girl, I doubt. Yet love had done for her what law never did, and she was good enough now, poor child, left all alone.

All alone! Why, no. She could never be alone any more now. Her soul had been awakened in the light of a new dawn, to which the flaming primrose of Australian morning is but darkness. The sentimental love and admiration for one greyish headed man, now alone upon the broad weltering sea, a love which, fed on absence, had wrought such a change in her that she found her body transformed into a temple of new hopes and fears, new sympathies and anxieties. She was *living*, so she could never be alone.

She had money now, nearly £5,000. Mr. Hagbut, as one of her father's executors, had done better by her than he was absolutely warranted by law: of that she never knew. "How on earth," said Lord Ducetoy to her once, "do you manage to get eight per cent. for your money? I can't." Hagbut knew. That frank, Americanised young nobleman consulted her often on business matters relating to his approaching marriage, declaring that he was certain that her father's genius for business must have descended on her. The most he made by it, however, was being looted of £20 for the Sailors' Orphans' Home.

For she was waiting by the tide for her man at sea who came not, and sent no message or sign. Her life was the life of the sea-folks now. The good Tibbeys from Chelsea had more than once come to see her, and had begged her to come to them; but her answer was always the same: "That life is dead and past. I am waiting by the tide, my dears, for him who is at sea. I will never go westward again into that wilderness. I wait upon the shore for him, and I think he will come back to me. If he does not, I will wait still."

Carry and Mrs. Russel said that poor Rebecca was moping herself to death all alone down at Limehouse. Now, on the other hand, Miss Soper, whose father was dead, having had a look or two at Limehouse, took apartments there, and carrying her mother down, established herself; thereby emphatically proving her opinion of the difference between Walham Green and Limehouse. The split between herself and Carry and Russel was complete.

"Rebecca," said the old schoolmistress, "is worth the lot of you put together. The girl is doing hard work and good work, and I have been used to hard work since I was fourteen" (as, indeed, she had); "and I am going to do some more of it. Mrs. Russel, it is the want of hard work which has spoilt my temper and yours; and it will spoil yours, too, Mrs. Hagbut." The two saw very little of her after this.

I am not Homer, and so I cannot describe the fearful battles which went on between Miss Soper and Doctor Barnham, the Papist. The number of times a day which they announced one another's ultimate destruction was something fearful. But they were excellent good friends, and worked together admirably, in the little sharp attack of cholera in that year; partly, I think, from jealousy, to see who could do most.

So it came to pass that Rebecca saw more of her old enemy than ever she had done before. And when she came to compare Soper's life with her own, she felt herself a very worthless person.

The very first and purest pleasure which Rebecca got, when she had settled down, was a certain school for sailors' children, got together and kept together by a fat old woman, Mrs. Frump. She founded it, she taught it (mainly), she managed it, and she paid for it. *She was it.* Soper grubbed out the story about it; and it was, that her son had gone away, and had been lost in a "cypphoon," leaving her two infant children to educate. And Mrs. Frump had decided that it was best that the children should have company. And so the school had grown from two sailors' orphans to twenty-eight sailors' children, whose fathers might return, or, on the other hand, might not. And it was by the tideway, and the little ones could see the ships as they passed close by.

It was one of those temporary schools, kept together by the force of character of a single person; and which, when God thinks fit to say to that person, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," break up and go to pieces, and are heard of no more.

Yet their good works live after them. I am not foolish enough, of course, to say for an instant that unorganised schools, dependent

on mere individuals, should in any way take the place of organised schools; yet I say thus much about such schools as these, which I have known, that they have impressed a certain die of character on the children taught there, and have deserved well of the State. Nay, more: I believe, that on the last great gathering, when one of the founders and keepers of these schools shall come up for judgment, and the Great One shall say, "Who will speak for this man?" hundreds of white hands will be held up out of the crowd, and their owners will say, "Lord, he showed us the way to thy Son."

Well, that is only my opinion about those schools. We are getting too serious, I fear.

Rebecca watched old Frump as a cat watches a mouse. But she was a determined old girl, our Rebecca, and intended to have her wicked will of Frump. She confronted Frump in the street one day, and asked her if she might come and teach in her school.

Frump eyed her over from top to toe, and said, "Why?"

Rebecca was perfectly ready for her. She told Frump the whole of her story from beginning to end; and, in conclusion, said pitifully, "Please, let me help."

"Humph!" said Frump, "as a general rule I don't like Dissenters round my place. But you have got the right kind of eye, and I know Morley. You can come if you like."

"I thank you very much," said Rebecca.

"Are you fond of your tea, child?" asked Frump.

"Yes, I like it *very* much," said Rebecca.

"Then you had better come along and have some of it with me," said Frump.

And at tea Rebecca explained to Frump that her father had been a Dissenter and her mother a Papist. Frump was inclined, on the whole, to look on this in the light of a good cross; not like the orthodox thing certainly, but not so very bad. She cautioned Rebecca carefully about the expression of unorthodox opinions on one side or the other. Rebecca promised strict obedience; and they became good friends.

So she got among the pretty, innocent sailors' children, and loved them, and worked diligently among them, not only for their own sweet sakes, but for the sake of her own dear sailor far away upon the wild sea.

Another thing which raised her soul much in these times was this: the ritualisms of the sect to which she clung were not bald and barren to her here, as they were at Walham Green. She craved for light and music in her ritual; and to some extent she got it here. The light was in the upturned eyes of the little

congregation, the music was got by the rushing of the wind and the lapping of the tide outside the chapel.

But there was a great attraction in her chapel just now. A young missionary had come home, having lost his wife in some wild attempt to spread Christianity in some dim spot on the Congo, where the Capuchins and Jesuits had failed 200 years before. A wild young man with a tangled head, blazing black eyes, a bad heart-disease, a precarious income of £58 a year, and what I choose to call a golden faith. This young man had gone through more troubles than St. Paul himself, and had come home to take Morley's duty. Barnham, the Papist, told Miss Soper that that man was a loss to the Catholic Church, for that he preached the Real Presence, as in *his* language he most certainly did. She, Soper, was *furious*, but Dr. Barnham was a great deal too strong for her, Soper not being able from her professions to urge *petitio principii* against him, and leaving him free to argue from their common major.

Frump, however, retired on the lines of Torres Vedras, until the country should be wasted before her. Her lines were, that young Jones, the Dissenting missionary, was a Jesuit in disguise. Which was a safe thing to say.

But in spite of the rather singular things which this tangle-headed young man said about the necessity of baptism, the inconceivable sin of falling away from grace, and the (practically) ultra-Romish views of the communion, Rebecca loved to hear this young man preach. For there was an earnest fury about every word of his which took her heart, and his words carried with them the scent of the distant sea, the waves of which wandered over his dead wife's coffin.

So, busy and active, yet perfectly peaceful, still she waited for Alfred Morley beside the tide.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE FIRST MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.

So she hung on, doing the work which God in his kindness had given her. Waiting by the tide, month after month, for a message from the sea. Morley, Hartop, and Hetty, had arranged in council to try her, and they tried her hard. But they were sure

of her from the first. Those who go down into the sea in ships, and do their business in the great waters, these people know a man or a woman when they see one.

There came to Rebecca pious Roman Catholics, who said, "You have money, and your mother was a Catholic. Come and see what we are doing among the Irish dock labourers." And she gave to them. And three weeks afterwards a quiet Protestant gentleman, while beginning to give a lecture on Garibaldi, at Birkenhead, had the windows of his hall stoned, which rather irritated Rebecca, who loved Garibaldi.

But there was not much irritation going on at Pilot Terrace. They did not know yet that the Camps were drowned, and they were too busy to be very much irritated. Mrs. Tryon and Miss Soper fought pretty persistently, not being at all fond of one another. Soper set up for being a lady, and Mrs. Tryon thanked heaven that she was not one. This was a very pretty cause of quarrel as it stood, and neither lady was in any way inclined to forego it on any opportunity. As for Rebecca, she never quarrelled with anybody, and no one ever quarrelled with her. She was the pet and the admiration of the whole row. Her extraordinary beauty, now developing rapidly, and her imperial carriage, were sufficient to ensure her from impertinence anywhere. It would have been ill for the man who had dared to insult her. She went everywhere, into all kinds of odd places, so much that Carry came weeping to Miss Soper and Mrs. Tryon about it.

"Fiddlededee," said the Soper. "The girl is right enough. She is doing good and learning good. Stuff!"

"But she is seeing so much sin," wept Carry.

"Yes, and its consequences," snapped Soper. "A precious good thing for her."

Mrs. Tryon took a stronger line, and requested Carry to remark that there were always plenty of sailors about, she believed.

Poor Carry said that indeed they were such a terrible lot of roughs, she could hardly sleep in her bed for thinking of Rebecca among such savages.

It is hard to depict the wrath and fury of Mrs. Tryon.

"Roughs and savages," she growled. "That I at sixty years should have lived to hear my man called a rough and a savage! Your sister is safer among our lads than ever she would be among your West End dandies. Though, mind you, I have been in many ports, and a woman who respects herself is safe in any one of them. Roughs and savages! Even if they were,

such as she should go among them, then, and civilise them. Shame on you, woman ! ”

Carry took nothing at all, therefore, by her motion whatever, and after this Rebecca was left quite alone to get on with Moriarty, Soper, Russel, Tryon, Frump, the sailors and the poor as best she could, which was very well indeed.

When the wind was very wild, and the rain beat upon the glass, she would get up, and do as she had now so often seen the sailors' wives do, walk up and down the room with her arms tightly folded ; thinking of the man she loved at sea.

It was a very wild fierce night six months after she came there, and was very late. She had not long come in, after making one of some eighty women who had been out in the rain and the wild weather to see an accident. Captain Moriarty had drifted from his moorings in the gale, and caused an alarm as great as if the Houses of Parliament were a-fire. Rebecca had ended with a hearty laugh when all things were put straight, and had come home to her solitary supper of bread and cheese ; and the wind was very wild, and her heart was very heavy, and she ate her supper walking up and down, and, I am very much afraid, crying.

The door was opened, and a voice coming from a figure which she could not see, said, “ If you please, Miss, old Job Partridge, of the *Mary Ann*, is much worse, and wants to see you immediately.”

“ I will be with you directly,” said Rebecca ; “ how far is it ? ”

“ About a mile straight in the teeth of the wind, and it is raining cats, dogs, marlin-spikes and copper sheathing,” said the voice.

“ I will be with you in two minutes,” said Rebecca. “ I have been out and got my hair wet, and have been drying it. Mr. Moriarty has lost his moorings, but he has been brought up by a hawser from the *Elizabeth* now. I will not detain you an instant.”

The voice said, in a most emphatic manner, “ You will do,” and out of the darkness came a young woman shorter than herself, who put her two hands on Rebecca's shoulders, and looked up, and Rebecca knew in an instant that she was looking on a beauty more splendid than her own.

She was perfectly amazed, and stammered out, “ Is it, is it —— ”

“ Of course it is, my dear soul.”

“ Is it *Hetty* ? ” said Rebecca.

“ Of course it is, my dear. Who else did you think it was ? Now have a good look at me.”

CHAPTER XXXV.

HETTY AT LAST.

"Now look at me," said Hetty; and Rebecca did so, with fixed eyes and open mouth, for this mysterious long-concealed Hetty was the strangest creature she had ever seen in her life.

She was dressed in close-fitting sailor's blue, and had just taken a sailor's tarpaulin hat off her head, and shaken out her hair; it was a crown of dark chestnut. In features, more particularly in the quaint beautiful mouth, turned habitually up at the corners, she resembled very closely Sir Joshua's *Muscipula*; as she shaded her great hazel eyes with her hand, to get a good look at Rebecca, Rebecca saw that she was like her father, but also like some one she had never seen.

Rebecca was dazed and stunned at the apparition. She had loved beauty deeply, and been told that Hetty was beautiful; but she was not prepared for *this*. And where did the girl get that wondrous, tender, pathetic *expression* from, almost as strange as her beauty? Rebecca soon knew whence came that look.

"Rebecca, dear," said Hetty, "God is sending Jack and I a little one. Will you nurse me until it is born, and I am fit to go afloat again?"

That was all she said, and Rebecca said exactly nothing at all; but she laughed such a happy laugh that Hetty laughed again; and kissing her and shaking the raindrops from her hair, sat down upon the easy chair and demanded tea.

The seed-time of Rebecca's life had been hard and bitter, but the harvest was beginning now. Beginning in doubt, trouble, anxiety, but ending in deep glorious happiness. She was getting a share in the great life which was moving about her. The arrival of this strange, beautiful storm-bird from the wild sea, was now, to her, a deeper, more intense pleasure than all the castles, broughams, opera-boxes, and diamonds, that any lady ever had in this world.

Idle women will not understand this; on the other hand, women who have courageously done their best to assist in the great task of civilisation, under all kinds of sneers and discouragement, *will* understand it.

Do you say that there was nothing to make her absolutely intoxicated with pure sentimental happiness, in the arrival of this little beauty from her strange wild adventures, coming to her for protection? If you say that, I disagree with you. There was a great deal which made her feel that the harvest-time of her life had fairly begun.

Experts say that those passages in Joachim's intonation of Beethoven, which made ox-like, heavy men, of good brains, twitch their hands nervously in the excess of wonder and pleasure, are got by sliding not impinging. That is to say that the good Herr, in passing from one note to another, gives you an incalculable million of tones, and talks a language not of this earth, but known and half understood by most; whether in the past or the future, I am unable to say. Wordsworth says the past; but who told *him*? The notes in Rebecca's little sonata of life had all been violently impinged.

Until she came to Limehouse among the sailor's wives, the music of her life had been written in violent staccato. Now she began to find herself among tones as delicate, as indescribable as those of Joachim or Burne Jones.*

Here came to her Hetty from the sea. And she was wife of a man she had been inclined to love, and daughter of a man whom she loved better than all the world put together. And Rebecca loved her: and there was another not yet visible, and she loved it. And it was blowing nearly a gale of wind, and she did not know where Morley was, and Hetty did not know where Hartop was; and the Camps had not been heard of; and Mr. Moriarty, in moving the *Ninety-eight* to fresh moorings, had got thwarted with a Prussian and extremely Protestant brig, and had used language unbecoming him; and little Billy Pitcher had tipped himself into the dock at low water, and broken his head; and she must go and see the child as soon as she had made Hetty's tea—Becky was living plenty of half and quarter tones now.

"Hetty, dear; Hetty, sweet," said Rebecca; "can you spare me for a very little time? Billy Pitcher has fallen on his head in the dock, and I promised him a horse, and he won't go to sleep without it."

Said Hetty, drinking her tea—

"Bother the child. He can get on without his horse to-night. Sailors' children must go to sleep without toys. But, my dear, you must go out, unless you have a girl to send; you must go to old Tryon, and tell her to come here and bring her things. It is blowing S.S.E., and half a gale, so you will get wet. Mind the hawsers, you know, or you will go the way of Billy Pitcher."

* I am only speaking of Mr. Burne Jones' colour. On other points he has incurred the penalty of death. Perhaps the Habitual Criminals' Bill will touch him up. Ten years' penal servitude among third-rate "Présenté par l'Empereur" pictures in France might bring him to a sense of his sins.

And so Rebecca departed, with the wind in her face, to Mrs. Tryon. Mrs. Tryon did not object to the arrangement at all ; but she said that she was not going to Hetty or to any woman in the world until Tommy Bithers had brought his brig in. She was not going to be Moriartied twice ; and Bithers, though a sound Protestant, was worse than Moriarty ; and his berth was opposite her house, and she did not want it pulled about her ears. " Tide would serve about twelve," she said ; " and so you two fools go and talk it over till then."

Rebecca went back, and sat on the floor by Hetty's sofa, shaking the raindrops out of her hair. Rebecca had heard that when families were to be increased the ladies who increased them were not by any means to be agitated. Still Hetty had put her arm round her neck, and they were most comfortable together.

" I think we shall be very fond of one another," said Hetty.

" That is quite my opinion," said Rebecca. " Where have you been, Hetty ?"

" Slopping round," said Hetty. " I am perfectly sick and tired of these clipper ships ; and I declare most positively, that when what is going to happen has happened, I will never put my kit on board of another. Jack, thank Heaven, has got one of the old sort."

" Has he got a ship ?" asked Rebecca, eagerly.

" Certainly he has," said Hetty. " I will tell you all about it, if you will not jump out of your skin. He has had his certificate now for two years, and the skipper of the *Flying Cloud* died at Aspinwall. And he was telegraphed to, when he was at New York, to go down and take charge of her ; and he went away, and I went on a little way with the old ship, taking hardware to St. Thomas's, not of much use, for we had no passengers except a fat man whom we rather thought had robbed a bank. But when we came to St. Thomas, there was the *Severn* (she is the West Indy Mail, my dear), and Captain Gardiner he comes on board in a pretty state of mind for Jane Higgs (his head stewardess, formerly on the Liverpool and Belfast), had fallen down the companion and injured her chest. ' And, Mrs. Hartop,' he said, ' if you don't help me, I don't know whatever I shall do : I have got three ladies and eight children for Rio, all as helpless and as innocent as babies.' ' I would do more than that for you, Captain Gardiner,' I said. And so I chucked my kit aboard her, and away we went, thundering southward ! The finest ship ever I sailed in.

" It was very pleasant. The most of the men knew me, or all

about me, and gold was not too good for me to eat off. Ah ! you don't know sailors yet. If any man on board that ship had dared to look rude at me, I doubt he would have gone overboard.

"One of the babies died. When I heard the little corpse go sliding overboard, I knew that God had given a life for the one he had just taken, and I told the poor mother so. She was very glad of it ; I thought that I was perhaps wrong in telling her, for fear of wounding her, but the words came out of my mouth, and they comforted her. For which, God be thanked.

"Well, my dear, we got to Rio with only this one death. And there the strangest surprise happened ever you heard of in your life. I don't think anything in the 'Arabian Nights' happened stranger. Our engine-room men had got up steam, and we were moving through the water, when there came in through the heads a great ship, a perfect cloud of duck, Rebecca, carrying on to the last minute. I was standing with Gardiner on the bridge, as she came racing on, and when she stowed sail after sail, and brought up so neat, I said to Gardiner, 'There is a *man* in command of that ship.'

" 'What a beauty she is ! What is she ? ' said Gardiner.

"And old Rangoon, who was down in the waist, and had sailed with me before, sang out, 'She is Missis Hartop's man's ship, the *Flying Cloud*. I know her. That's Hartop himself on the forecastle, piloting himself, as usual. I wouldn't give eighteen-pence for that young man's certificate if he carries on into harbour like this, without a pilot. He has heard of the missis being here, and has been carrying on. My opinion is that your missis is your missis, but that similarly your owners is your owners. I don't hold with skippers carrying away expensive sticks a following of their wives.'

"Gardiner gave the word to bank up fires, and catch moorings again. We had a boat lowered in five minutes, and in two more I was with Jack on his own quarter-deck—*his own*, my dear, think of that ! There was no one but he and I and the young man at the wheel. Jack's mate, an excellent young man, but who from his eye looks very much like carrying on for a passage—a young man I shall remove when I am well—he moored the ship, so I had twenty minutes with Jack. He wanted me sadly to go with him ; but I told him what was the matter, and that he had not one woman aboard, and he yielded. God bless that man ! He would make any one believe in a good God if one had not done so before.

" 'God go with you, dear little wife,' he said. 'Gardiner will

see to you. Gardiner is a good man. Go home straight to Rebecca and old Tryon; they are true salt, both of them.' And so we had a kiss once more, and I went over the side, and came thundering home in the *Severn* with Gardiner."

"And where is Jack Hartop gone?" asked Rebecca.

"Callao, for orders," said Hetty; "that, he says, expresses, in sailors' language, Greek Kalends. Ships cleared for Callao never know where they are going; it may be Melbourne, and it may be Hong Kong—one as likely as the other. I shall not see him for a year."

"Are you not impatient?" asked Rebecca.

"My good soul, if sailors' wives were to get impatient they would go mad. I have laid my heart and soul at the feet of one sailor, and you have laid yours at the feet of another. Sailors' wives must know how to wait and suffer. And if you have a common religion, if you believe that there is no cloud at death between you and your husband, you can get through anything. That is the case between Jack and myself."

"Yes," said Rebecca. And there was a great deal in her "Yes."

"Now," said Hetty, "I am going to tell you a thing which will make you very angry and make you hate me. Jack has openly joined the Church of England, and I have gone with him."

"Why not, Hetty?" said Rebecca, turning her face to Hetty.

"Why not?" said Hetty. "Why, of all the indiscretions I ever committed, this is the worst. I hope you will not be so foolish as I have been."

"Why not?" said Rebecca.

"Because you would cut the last ground from under my father's feet. Rebecca, you have a noble soul committed to your care, for which you will have to answer at the Day of Judgment. Follow him—do not lead him. A led man is an ill thing. I have been to sea, and I know."

Here there was an interruption: Mrs. Tryon stood at the door.

"Now then, Miss Turner; you are talking her to death. Het, old girl, how are you? You did right to come home to Miss Turner and I, though Miss Turner is a fool."

"I have known that for a long time," said Rebecca, quietly; for Mrs. Tryon had called her a fool in a way which did not give offence. There are different ways of calling people fools.

"Where is your man gone?" said Mrs. Tryon, to Hetty.

"To Callao for orders," said Hetty.

"He is a fool, and you were a fool for letting him go," said Tryon.

"Don't talk nonsense, my dear soul," said Hetty. "You may think it fine, but we do not."

"Is he going through the Straits or round the Horn?" asked Tryon.

"Round the Horn," said Hetty. "His ship would never beat through the Straits, she is bad to get about. I did not like his crew myself. Too many Malays. I don't like it altogether, and the ship is, I doubt, wet; and in my opinion, Mrs. Tryon, she is extremely over-sparred. Why, Jack told me himself that she had broken her main-yard lift by sheer rolling, and dropped it on to the slings."

"Those iron lifts are all rubbish," said Mrs. Tryon.

"I know that," said Hetty; "but that does not make amends for Jack's carrying on round the Horn with iron lifts. And his ships bows are too far aft, so that she don't seem as though she would lift well with a reefed foresail, when she is going before it. As for laying her to, in a gale of wind, my dear, if I was on board of her when Jack proposed to do it, I should get out and walk."

"Look at her," said Tryon, quietly.

It was Rebecca to whom she called attention. She had gone to sleep on the floor with her head on a hassock. "Pretty sweet," said Tryon. "Have you heard anything of Morley, dear?"

"Speak very low," said Hetty. "Pa has gone on to Patagonia in the *Eliza*. And the *Sydney Herald* says that they are all dead."

"You don't believe it, dear?" said Mrs. Tryon.

"Of course I don't," said Hetty. "Jack says that he don't believe a *hang* of it."

That is the way religious sailors' wives talk confidentially, ladies and gentlemen. Of course they ought not to do so, but they do it.

"I don't believe a solitary word of it," said Tryon. "But that Patagonian coast is a awful bad 'un. Look how sweet she sleeps, pretty love, pretty dear."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

NO NEWS.

THERE came a long time now, while those two abode together like Ruth and Naomi. But all danger to Rebecca was over, in the presence of a necessity greater than her own. Her own self was dead and ended, and she had three others, Morley, Hetty, and Hartop; not to mention three dozen others in the swarming, seafaring population all around her.

To lose sight of self utterly for one moment, is to have lived for one moment.

Rebecca lived much now, for she never had time to think of herself at all. And the very person who took her away from herself most was that bonny, shrewd, beautiful Hetty.

MRS. Tryon had a fight with Hetty about her treatment of Rebecca; but after a long engagement of an hour Tryon retired, with all her masts shot away (but with her colours flying), leaving Hetty the victory: as I cannot, from want of space, give an account of the whole of this great battle, I will give the last part of it; so that, *ex pede Herculem*, the reader may judge what the beginning of the fight was like. And, I may say, that if the last sentence is not the neatest example of Catachresis written this year, I should be glad to see the other.

"You worry the girl so," said Tryon.

"I want to," said Hetty. "I want to take her out of herself, and make her think of *me*, not of my father."

"Why?"

"Because I am beginning to believe that my father is in heaven," said Hetty. "The Society are getting very anxious."

"But you will make Rebecca dislike you," said Tryon.

"Well, that would not much matter that I know of. Perhaps it would be better for her if she could. But that can never happen, Mrs. Tryon. She and I have seen such deep, unutterable light of love in one another's eyes, more than once, that we know it can never be quenched."

"But sending her these errands, in such weather," said Mrs. Tryon; "you will kill her."

"She is not made of sugar," said Hetty.

Rebecca came in at this moment, and as an illustration of how much Hetty meant to attend to Mrs. Tryon, she said to Rebecca coolly—

"I want sardines for my supper. I am to have everything I

fancy, and I fancy them. And the sardines at the corner shop are nothing but pilchards, and taste of hair-oil. Go up the street, and get a box of the small ones at Elms's."

And Rebecca went out into the rain again, without one word.

"I call it shameful usage," said Mrs. Tryon.

"It is the system I mean to pursue with her," said Hetty, coolly. And the good Tryon flumped out of the room, and went and had tea with Soper and Frump, and Captain Moriarty dropped in for a social chat with the ladies, and to take his tay wather. And Frump (Establishment) fell foul of Soper and Tryon (Dissenting); and when they had pretty well blown off the steam, they all three pitched into Moriarty (Papist), and made a kind of religious Walpurgis night of it, giving to one another, all at once, and at the top of their voices, the most remarkable religious experiences. Moriarty left at eight to go on board, leaving the ladies in full wrangle; but Moriarty's apprentice deponed to Tryon the next day, that he never came on board till half-past two, and was then disguised in drink, and singing the seditious song known as "Croppies lie down."

But Rebecca knew nothing of the good Irishman's eccentricities. She came back with the sardines, and Hetty called her to her.

"Rebecca, Mrs. Tryon has been saying that if I try you as I do you will lose your love for me. Is that so?"

"She must be perfectly foolish," said Rebecca, sharply. "I wish you would try me more. *You* don't think it, Hetty?"

"Not I. I will tell you the whole truth. If sailors' wives brood and think of nothing but themselves and their husbands, they will go mad. Unless you are busy you will never be happy. My father told me that when I was very young; and I acted on it in a way which did not please him or some others very much. Get out of yourself. Make others troubles your own, and your own will be as nothing. I have no letter from Jack, from Val-paraiso."

"And I have none from Alfred."

"Self again. You should think of me, not of my father. I told you that pa was gone to Patagonia, and you don't suppose that there are letter-boxes there. You should think about *me*."

But Rebecca cried very much indeed, and Hetty let her alone for a little. "She must get trained as I did or she will never stand the news," said Hetty.

"Becky, dear," she said at last, "get me to bed, and send for Dr. Barnham. I am going to be ill." And Rebecca got her to bed and sent for the doctor.

Meanwhile, Hetty had leant her face to the wall, weeping silently. "Father and Jack both together. O God, in thine infinite mercy, judge me not too heavily."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SECOND MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.

BUT a week or more after, Hetty, lying in the same bed where Mr. Turner had died, and watching the ships pass up and down the river, lay with a brave boy on her bosom, and was quite quiet, and well, saying very little indeed. She asked Rebecca to go out and see how the wind and the mercury were, and Rebecca came back with the intelligence that the wind was S.S.E. half E., and that the mercury was cupped at 29.10. "Not that it matters to you and I, my dear," said Hetty, "only it is a good habit for a sailor's wife to notice; our men are too far away."

She had only sent Rebecca out that she might have some fresh air. But Rebecca, sleepy and pale, had arisen and gone after the weathercock and barometer so cheerfully, that Hetty had emphatically determined that she should be tried no longer.

She asked her to take the baby, and when she had done so, she looked her straight in the face, and said—

"Rebecca, from this moment I and you are one. Nothing must ever divide us. 'Where thou goest I will go, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.'"

"It should be so, and shall be so," said Rebecca. "Hetty, I have loved you so long, and sought your love so hard, it should surely be so."

"Becky," said Hetty, quietly, "suppose that you were maid-widow, and I was mother-widow, could you give your life to a work?"

"If you will tell me, I will do as you say. But why do you ask me?"

"Because we may both be widows—some day. Will you abide with me and work among the sailor's wives, while I drown my grief in the dear salt sea, and work at civilising the sailors?"

"I will do so; what you say and do is good to hear, good to do. But why——"

"There is old Tryon come to inquire," said Hetty; "go down and tell her something or another. No, stay, have her up; for she is true blue salt, a forty fathom woman, if there ever was one. And so are you, Becky. Was there ever a sailor in your mother's family, Beck?"

"My *grandfather* was an admiral."

"Hah! that accounts for it," said Hetty; "I knew that there were deep sea soundings somewhere. Now go fetch up old Tryon."

Rebecca went to do so, but Mrs. Tryon, being admitted into the passage, put her helm down, and, with a smart collision, sent Rebecca into the front parlour.

She stood looking at Rebecca in a great state of anger, and, after a few seconds, said, "You have made a nice mess of it among you."

"Please, Mrs. Tryon," said Rebecca, "tell Hetty and myself what is the matter."

"You may well say what is the matter?" said Mrs. Tryon. "How is Hetty, and how is the baby?"

"They are both quite well."

"I am glad it is a girl," said Mrs. Tryon.

"It is a boy," said Rebecca.

"Well, they have more chance of getting their living than girls. That is one comfort. I suppose you know that Jack Hartop has lost his ship."

Rebecca was so puzzled by the news that she found herself wondering whether Jack Hartop had dropped his ship down an area railings, or lost it at cards, or left it accidentally in a railway carriage, or gone on shore forgetfully and let it sail away by itself into unknown seas; when Mrs. Tryon said, sharply—

"You are wool-gathering. Don't do it. He has lost his ship on Cape Northumberland, and his certificate with it."

"It will kill her," said Rebecca.

"Yes, if she is told. But she must not be. Now you understand."

"Yes, I understand," said Rebecca, and Mrs. Tryon walked out; and just after Mr. Moriarty walked in.

"Dear Mr. Moriarty," said Rebecca, eagerly, "dear old friend. Tell me the truth about this dreadful business."

"Haven't I come to tell you, divil another? Mak your mind easy, Miss Turner. He is safe enough."

"Why do you think so?"

"He went to Callao for orders, and was sent to Melbourne. And he has got cast away on Cape Northumberland; like any

other gentleman. Why, Miss Turner, you have seen me, on two occasions, come to grief in this very dock."

"But will he lose his certificate?" asked Rebecca.

"He'll have it *suspended*," said Moriarty; "you may little think it, Miss Turner, but *my* certificate was suspended for two years, when I commanded the *Tipperary* screw, for, and because only that the *Derry*, screw collier, coming up stream, and I going down, I gave her a playful little bit of a Donnybrook ram in consequence of her name. And she got ashore before she sank, which was all she did. And it was potatoes and point with me for two years. Oh, yes, his certificate is gone."

So Rebecca went up again to Hetty, and made Tryon's apologies for not coming up.

It was a long time before Hetty was well enough to be told anything about Hartop's mishap. It was a much longer time before Rebecca said one word to her about it.

She did not know what to do. God solved the problem for her ultimately, in this way:

Hetty had got about, on the wharf, and by the river, with her baby, impressing on the newly-formed retina of that young gentleman the images of ships. Otherwise the life went on among the sailors' wives left waiting for some who came back hearty and well; for some who came back broken, though as dear as ever; and for some who never came back at all. It had come on to rain one evening, and Rebecca caught Hetty on the wharf, and pulled her into the house.

"I have news," said Rebecca.

"You need not trouble to say that, Becky," said Hetty. "Is it Pa or Jack?"

"Jack," said Rebecca. "He has lost his ship and been court-martialed."

"Then he is not dead?" said Hetty.

"Not he," said Rebecca.

"Then," said Hetty, very quietly, "may the good God to whom I have prayed in my deep affliction, comfort you, Rebecca, when your affliction comes, as you have comforted me in mine."

No self. No care for anything, save her God, her husband, and her duty.

"To thank *me* first," she thought. And she stood perfectly quiet, for knowing how Hetty loved Jack Hartop, she was surprised that she took it so quietly.

"Has Jack lost his certificate?" asked Hetty.

"No, Hetty. Hetty, be quiet, and I will tell you everything. Hetty, listen, and be quiet."

"I am quite quiet," said Hetty. "If Jack is alive and well, what care I? You say that he has not lost his certificate. If they had dared to take it away, I would have tweaked Dr. Deane's nose till they renewed it."

"But I have to read you something," said Rebecca.

"You had better read it, then," said Hetty.

Rebecca read in a very fluttering voice, from a newspaper, *The Argus of Melbourne*:—

"The Board which sat on Captain Hartop, of the ship *Flying Cloud*, have reported—

"It appears that Captain Hartop was keeping his due course, when, being warned by the sudden fall of the mercury, he made for sea, but in consequence of the calm which preceded the hurricane which has devastated our southern shores, he was unable to get way on his ship. After the cyclone struck her, of course there was no possibility of saving her. Up to this point the Board consider that Captain Hartop's conduct was most seamanlike——,"

"Thank you for nothing, quoth the gallipot," said Hetty, quietly. "If Jack could not fiddle his ship out of anything in reason, I should like to see the man who could."

"After the ship struck on the reef under Cape Northumberland, the conduct of Captain Hartop was beyond all praise for which they can find words. His personal prestige among his sailors seems to have been so great, that on this terrible night they passed quietly into the boats, in the calmer water, in the lee of the reef, without noticing that he himself had remained with his first mate, Green——,"

"I shall *not* discharge that young man," said Hetty, with a slight flutter in her voice; "go on, Rebecca. Jack, Jack, you are a sailor."

"In order to see whether there was any chance of saving anything for the underwriters in case of the gale moderating, taking his chance of swimming on shore. The Board wish it to be distinctly understood that their opinion is, that during this unhappy wreck, and in the long march between the place of the wreck and the nearest settlement, Captain Hartop conducted himself from first to last like a splendid British sailor."

"Of course, Jack did," said Hetty, quietly. "Do not I know him? Jack is a man of pluck and energy. Jack is a sailor, every inch of him. I suppose his owners will give him another ship at once, after that report. If they don't I will spend a little time at their office not very pleasantly for them."

And she looked Rebecca straight in the face as cool as a cucumber. And Rebecca was deeply puzzled.

"Well, and so that is the whole of it, is it?" said Hetty. "I am glad that beast of a ship is at the bottom of the sea without drowning Jack or any of the men. Is there anything more to tell?"

Rebecca was getting more and more puzzled. "Has she a heart at all?" she said to herself.

"Yes, Hetty," she said; "but I do not know how to tell it. The Panama route——"

There was no need to say more, or to question whether or no Hetty had a heart. The doorway opened quickly, and in the open doorway stood Jack Hartop.

Hetty stood up and spread out her ten fingers towards him. In less than a second her pretty arms were around his neck, and he was hugging her like a bear. She said, "Love, love, love," and he said "Darling, darling, darling," which is folly the most incurable. But if you will bring me any gentleman who will affirm on his oath that he has never made a fool of himself to the same extent as far as his opportunities have gone, I will politely decline that gentleman's acquaintance.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE THIRD MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.

THE life thus enriched by two whom she loved went smoothly on. Not cheerfully, for there came no word of Mr. Morley at all. Hetty and Hartop spoke continually about him, always pleasantly. When it was hot Hetty would say, "I doubt he is cold, poor dear, there where he is," and Hartop would say, "Ay, it is winter there now." At dinner, Hetty might say, "I doubt he has no lamb and green peas to-day, poor man;" and Hartop would say, "No, he will be having mainly fish and seal beef for his dinner. It is not bad, but not so good as this."

So they would talk to her, keeping his image perpetually before her mind, they both having given up all hope.

They kept from her the news that the missionary ship had been lost, but that a few of the missionaries were heard to be alive three months after. They kept from her their knowledge of the bitter hopeless coast of Patagonia, and Hetty had so persistently forced

on her the maxim that sailors' wives must not fret that she believed her, and abode in quiet, busy, and not unhappy, ignorance of the chances of the sea.

But day by day it became evident to her that Jack Hartop was growing to be a person of great consequence amongst a certain great and powerful Society. Her father had belonged to this Society, and she had been to a May meeting of it, presided over by a certain great earl; and one day in these times she found this same earl, whom she knew by sight, talking eagerly and familiarly with Jack Hartop.

She heard him say, "It is certainly a splendid offer—a splendid offer. And as a sailor, Mr. Hartop, you think that the yacht is big enough."

"Bless you, my lord, I would sail her anywhere! 280 tons—why she is a frigate."

"It is somewhat singular that Lord Ducetoy, who is not even a subscriber, and a——"

At this moment Rebecca passed with a slight bow, and went on.

"Who is that young lady?" asked Lord S.

"Miss Turner."

"Oh; I was saying that it seems singular that a mere sportsman like Lord Ducetoy should interest himself so deeply in a cause like this, as to lend her his yacht and stores, and offer to pay a picked crew out of his own pocket, on condition of your commanding the expedition."

"My lord," said Hartop, "it is easily accounted for. Lord Ducetoy is cousin to Miss Turner, who has just passed, and Lord Ducetoy was under the deepest obligations to her father for saving his property from the Philpott smash."

"But what has Miss Turner to do with it?"

"She is engaged to be married to Morley, and she does not know what you and I do."

"God help her in her grief," said Lord S., raising his hat solemnly.

"Amen," said Jack Hartop.

"When can you sail?"

"Well, in consequence of this offer of Lord Ducetoy's, I can get to sea in a week. If they are alive, they owe their lives to Lord Ducetoy."

"Under God," said Lord S.

"Under God, I mean," said Jack. "But he has saved us in one way or another two months of valuable time."

"It is really so."

"By-the-bye, my lord, Miss Turner is to know nothing of Lord Ducetoy's gift."

"Indeed! was there ever any tenderness in that quarter?"

"Oh, never, I think. He lost his heart effectually before he ever knew much of her; but he has a profound admiration for her."

"Is Mrs. Hartop going?" said Lord S.

"Oh yes, my lord, *she* is going. You may be quite certain that she could not keep her hand out of a thing of this kind."

"God go with her!" said Lord S., and so they parted.

"Rebecca," said Hetty to her, next morning, "Jack has got another ship."

"A good one?"

"A *splendid* one. A missionary ship. United Missionary Society. The U. M. S. have picked him out. And I am going too."

"I wish I was," said Rebecca; "but I am so glad for Jack. I cannot go, for Alfred might come while I was away, and would be very sorry to miss me."

Hetty went quietly out of the room, humming a tune, as if to fetch something, went upstairs, and threw herself on her bed in a fury and tempest of tears. She believed—as we all did—that she was bound on a quest for some relic or remnant of the dead, left carelessly by wolf or the hardly less cruel savage.

Jack, however, had given his orders that Hetty was to be ready in six days, and so there was fine stitching, and sewing, and shopping, with not much time to talk about matters. The yacht had come round from Cowes, and was lying off the terrace, and Moriarty and Jack were working like furies, getting her stores aboard, while Mrs. Tryon sat in a Windsor chair on deck, superintending in the absence of Hetty, and in fact in charge of the ship.

"Take another haul on that foretopsail lift," she would say. "Put some elbow-grease into it. B'lay, B'lay. That's better. A good sailor should like to see his wife smart on Sundays, and his ship all the week."

Another time, to a landsman moving a case clumsily, "Now then, young man, if you think that bitter beer bottles are made of copper sheathing, I don't. Chips," to the carpenter, "just prize that case open, and see how many he has broke and enter it. Besides, young man," she continued severely, "if you conceive that Lord Ducetoy's deck was made for you to shove iron-bound packing-cases about on, you are deceived: I should like to see you try that on board a man-of-war, my lad."

Soper came on board once, with the best intentions, in a boat ; but the hoisting her in, and hoisting her out, and her getting seasick, and one thing or another, made such a nuisance that the Tryon recommended her to go ashore and stay there, which she did.

The ship was to sail on Saturday, and on Friday, all day long, Rebecca was working in Hetty's cabin. She thought to herself, "What a beautiful place." Indeed it was, for it was the cabin which Lord Ducetoy had decorated for his young wife.

She heard Lord Ducetoy's voice in the main cabin, and a lady's voice who talked to him. She could not help hearing.

"My love," said the lady. "I quite agree with you ; by giving up our cruise the Society gains two months. I do not regret."

"But I had her decorated for you, love—only for Channel work : and she is going to the ocean."

"Well," said Lady Ducetoy, "I frankly and freely give my decorations to the ocean. My husband has done a generous and beautiful deed, for the sake of a noble woman ; that is worth all decorations to me."

They did not know she was on board, and they did not see her : but she heard them, and after a time understood what Lady Ducetoy meant. She hid from them, and it was only after the schooner had sailed that she knew that the "noble woman," spoken of by Lady Ducetoy, was none other than her own self.

For the first time in her life she slept on board ship that night with Hetty and the baby. The baby was quiet, an excellent baby in every relation of life : religious in times and seasons beyond all babies : never crying before four o'clock in the morning. The swirl of the tide against the bows of the yacht kept her awake nearly all the night, and it was mixed with the cries and the shoutings of men on ships bound for the great ocean, to which she so deeply longed to go ; for she knew that Morley was there, somewhere. Hetty dismissed her very early on the Saturday morning.

Then she went to the Tryon, who made her have breakfast, and finding that she was tearful, made her go upstairs and lie on her (Tryon's) bed for a good cry. And she had one. And when she had had it, Tryon came and said, "Get up, the slack water is moving seaward, the ebb will down strong directly, and they are going."

She arose and followed her at once. The wind was from the west, from the Gloucestershire hills which are the home of the river, and the air was thick with smoke.

On the wharf was a crowd of the strangest people—a bishop, Lord S., and Lord Ducetoy foremost ; with them a larger number of ecclesiastical persons, ranging from two Papist priests to a Quaker gentleman who was solemnly saying something to Jack Hartop about the wearing of flannel. But Rebecca heard her name passed from mouth to mouth, “Miss Turner ! hush, Miss Turner ! ”

She knew not why. The kind folks had kept the truth from her. She gave a deep sweeping courtesy to the bishop and Lord S., and a smile to Lord Ducetoy, and then she went up to Jack Hartop, and kissed him heartily on both cheeks.

“Jack, dear, I am so sorry you should go away. Take care of your Hetty and your ship, dear. God be with you.”

And Jack said nothing at all, but kissed her. And then he was in his boat, and then he was on his deck with Hetty beside him ; and then the tug had caught the schooner’s hawser, and she went out through the mist into the Kent and Essex sunlight. And *that* was over.

Lord Ducetoy and the bishop were with her as she rounded the turn of the river. “Rebecca,” said Lord Ducetoy, “could we have sent two better ones to seek him ? ”

“To seek whom ? ”

“Morley.”

“Is he dead ? ”

“They are gone to see,” said Lord Ducetoy : “it has been kept from you.”

Rebecca stood amazed, but quite quiet.

“My dear lady,” said the bishop ; “this matter has been kept from you by a consultation of many men. We are very anxious about Morley, and some of us believe that there is no hope. I am not of those who think there is no hope. For I most entirely think that God has a great work in hand for Morley, and that Morley has not been taken to his rest yet. I may be wrong—who can judge God’s ways ? but, my dear young lady, I believe you will live to see Morley by your side again, doing God’s work with your assistance.”

“Meanwhile ? ” said Rebecca, calmly.

“Meanwhile,” said the bishop, calmly, “do as you are doing. If you are not to meet him again on earth, you are rendering yourself more fit to meet him in heaven.”

For the next nine months the inhabitants of Limehouse got familiarised to a tall and splendidly beautiful young lady, always dressed in black, who walked perpetually about among the poor, followed by a withered lady in grey, who carried her basket, and

did what the tall young lady told her with never one murmur. These two were Rebecca and Miss Soper, for Rebecca had conquered and vanquished her Soper ; and if it had pleased Rebecca to turn Roman Catholic, I fear that the old man at Rome would have had two converts instead of one.

Russel and Carry came down once or twice. But they were an ill match for Rebecca, with the vigorous, wary, and emphatic Soper at her chariot-wheels. The hearty goodness which had always been in Miss Soper, kept in by penury, by responsibility for others, and by formulas, came out now. The lean, wizened, cross old Soper has become one of the best and kindest workers among the sailors' wives and sweethearts at the East End.

Said Soper to Rebecca once, in these times, " Becky, I tried to find out the secret of living to God ; and I failed, until you showed it to me. Who showed it to you ? "

" Morley," said Rebecca.

Nine months ; and hope growing dead as time went on. Hope of Morley utterly gone now to her, but not to others.

She was sitting in her class of girls one day, when the bishop came in, and touched her on the shoulder. Rebecca, although a Dissenter, had that love and reverence for this bishop which, I believe, is common to all sects in the Church of Christ. She rose from her seat, with her black lace shawl drooping from one shoulder, and bowed deeply. And the young Dissenters stared open-eyed at the spectacle of a real bishop talking to Teacher.

" I have news from the sea," said the bishop, holding out his left hand.

" Good or bad, my lord ? " said Rebecca.

" That is what I cannot make out," said the bishop. " We have heard from Hartop. He has recovered two, but believes Morley to be alive ten miles to the northward. Until we get his next letter we know nothing."

" And when shall we get his letter ? " asked Rebecca.

" Well," said the bishop, " he only allows himself ten days for exploration : and so it comes to this, that he will bring his own letter."

" Then the news about Mr. Morley will be brought by Hartop and Hetty ? " she said.

" That is exactly the case," said the bishop.

So she abode quietly, seeing her good works ripen in fruit about her everywhere. As month after month passed she became a great object of interest to people belonging to the great Society which had sent out Hartop and Hetty to seek for Morley.

There was a romance about her situation which took the kind

hearts of these good people greatly. The beautiful Miss Turner was talked of in many places of which she little dreamt.

She only knew that people were very kind to her. All sects of Christians were alike kind to her, and perhaps the Jews were as kind as any of them. As Lord Ducetoy said, "In a case of patience and work like that, differences of creed vanish, because what was only human has become divine."

Morley was given up for many months now. By degrees Tryon had broken it to her, and with true kindness had told her that there was no hope at all for him, and that people were even getting anxious about Hetty and Hartop. So she worked harder and harder, and never cried at all except for a few hours in the dead of night when she woke.

A little of the old life came to her now and then. The Tibbeys would make a Sabbath day's journey to her, and have cake and tea. Mr. Spicer or Mr. Akin would come and bid her God speed, like fine fellows as they were; and still the little dog Mab trailed after in her swift walking, doing good.

But one summer's day there was news; she would not ask what it was, but she was certain there was news. On the wharf there was Lord S. and Lord Ducetoy, excited, with Moriarty and Mrs. Tryon. Moriarty drew a diagram in the dust for the instruction of Lord Ducetoy, and Mrs. Tryon altered it with the ferrule of her umbrella. Whereupon those two fell out. Rebecca was sure there was news. And so there was.

It was half-past eleven, and a very dark night, and she was sitting up at some of her charity accounts, but listening for every sound, when she heard a step on the stair and sat rigid.

She knew it was Hetty's. Hetty came very quickly up the stair, threw open the door in all her full beauty, fresh from the sea, bare-headed, with the very salt on her hair. And Rebecca gave a loud wild cry, not articulate, but meaning much, *for she saw that Hetty was not in mourning.*

Not one solitary scrap of black about her. A great deal of pink ribbon, certainly; sailors love it, and so their wives wear it.

"Becky, my sweetheart," she said, "you must keep yourself cool; it is absolutely necessary that I am not to be disturbed on any account whatever."

"Is there news?" said Rebecca.

"I do not know what you mean by news, Becky," said Hetty. "But if you mean that we have found pa, and got pa, and brought pa home, and that pa is standing outside the door waiting to come in, why I say you are right." And she sat down on a chair by the door, and beat her knees, and cried.

It was actually true. From the lonely cavern on the ocean shore, death, in whose jaws he had lived so long, had given him up to love. It seemed incredible, even to Hetty now, but there was his grizzled hair smothered in Rebecca's and she laughed and believed.

They had begun their hunt to the very north, searching bay after bay, losing heart, losing hope, until they came to the Bay of St. Julian. Jack and Hetty were on the forecastle, watching the reef, but having a fine easterly suck of wind behind them, not caring much whether they took Pigafettas Channel or Sir Francis Drake's; Hetty was wondering aloud whereabouts Captain Doughtie had been hung, when she uttered a loud cry.

Before them was a long sandy beach, half-a-mile off, fringed with white surf; behind the beach was the prairie rolling off westward toward the Andes, and upon the beach was a solitary black figure, which walked up and down.

He was perfectly quiet when they got through the surf to him.

"I knew Jack would be after me if he could," he said, "but I thought he could not possibly be home in time." * And he told them the details of his adventure, and took them to the cave where his last faithful friend, Holt, lay in bed, covered with seaweed and grass, reading Quarle's "Emblems" to while away the short time before death.

Hetty had instantaneously possessed herself of the person of the Rev. Mr. Holt, leaving her father to Jack. He had been living on oysters, had Mr. Holt, which Mr. Morley had gathered day by day, and he said that they lay very cold on his stomach, and that he much missed his Baxter's "Saint's Rest," which he had dropped on the Pampas in walking here with Brother Morley, whom God had doubtless rescued for more successful work. Hetty, directing four of Lord Ducetoy's young men, got him through the surf and aboard, after which she had her will with him, and the Rev. Mr. Holt came home in better condition than he went out.

Morley was a man of splendid physical conformation, yet with a quiet soul which is more powerful than mere physique. None of all this terrible work had made much difference in him. He was certainly a degree more handsome, and a little more grey than ever, otherwise there was no change.

Those four sat together that night, and the peace which Morley

* This story is so dreadful and painful in reality that I would not write it. The original Morley met with a very different fate.

had brought to Rebecca in old times was with them that evening, the peace of God which passes all understanding.

The news of the safety of Morley had been known in London before Rebecca knew it. The Society had met, and it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Morley should be requested to accept the mission of Honawoorra as soon as his health would permit. The offer came to him the day after his arrival, and he answered that his health was in perfect order, and that, as he was getting slightly older, the sooner he went the better. He wanted three weeks to be married in, and then he was ready. He heartily thanked the committee for appointing his son-in-law, Hartop, to the command of the ship.

So one day, three weeks after this, Soper, Lord Ducetoy, Mr. Spicer, Lord S., the little Popish doctor, Mrs. Russel, the two Tibbeys, Mr. Akin, Mr. Hagbut, and Carry, and one hundred and fifty new friends, unnamed in this story, went to see the great missionary ship *Eirene* pass by out on her glorious expedition.

As she passed they cheered, as surely no people ever cheered before; for on her quarter-deck stood Morley and Rebecca, Jack Hartop and Hetty.

Tryon wept violently, and cast herself on Lord Ducetoy's bosom. "It's all your doing, my dear," she said, between her tears, "if it had not been for that there yacht of yourn, we should never have got him. She only wants twenty ton more iron ballast in her well aft, and the blocks of the topsail lift raised nine inches, to make her a craft in which *my* man that is gone would not have despised to have sailed in himself."

And so they went away to the work which God had found them to do. Whether they lived long and died happy, whether they were rich or poor, or whether they had many children or few, is nothing to us. God fitted these four people for a certain work in this world, and three of them had to wait till the fourth was fit to join them. I have tried to show how Rebecca was made ready for the others. Rebecca's difficulties had been so continually before one, that some might think I ought to call my story Rebecca. But I think, if you please, that in honour of the young lady, the reputation of whose deeds kept Rebecca firm, I will call my story after its real heroine, Hetty.



THE TWO CADETS.

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THE TWO CADETS.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

CADETS, not at Woolwich or Sandhurst, (such was not their good fortune,) but cadets of old and now impoverished houses—of houses which still kept up their ancient state. They were both handsome, well-grown, well-bred, but utterly poor, and utterly unfitted by their education for anything in the world, or, to speak more truly, for anything in any world but their own. Neither of them had place or provision of any kind, and both had been used to luxury from their youth up.

They were cousins—Edward Hornby and Lionel Horton. Edward was a large, loud, fierce man, very vicious, very handsome, a terrible bully (these were in the older times—the Camel-ford times), a splendid rider, a fine shot, as brave as a lion, and as treacherous as a leopard. Lionel was cast in a gentler and more feminine mould to all appearance; not quite so tall, perhaps even more handsome, and of pleasing genial manners. Somewhat idle even in the few things he had to do, but a most amiable and excellent young fellow, disgusted with his life, and knowing himself fit for higher things.

They had a third and mutual cousin, slightly younger, a young lady. Her family was as poor as were either of theirs, but she was rich. She was dowered with a beauty so wonderful that people in the world began to speak of it even now, before she was out; and to this beauty her father and mother looked, in part, to restore the fallen fortunes of their house, for they were heirless, and she was the last of the long old line.

She had been seen by few, but had been very much in the company of her cousins. Inevitably, but with singular infelicity, those two unhappy young men fell deeply in love with her, and

more unfortunately still, she returned the love of the more gentle Lionel.

It was in the autumn, at one of their dilapidated old country houses, that this took place. Edward broke the fiercest horses for her amusement; swam the broad cold river in November because she was on the other side, and that he might have the happiness of walking home beside her in his dripping clothes in the biting wind. But she did not care for him, she was far too refined a woman to be won by mere exhibitions of brute strength which any prize-fighter could surpass. When he did not frighten her he displeased her; she disliked him, and he saw it.

Lionel was a perfect gentleman, and though not a close scholar, had read somewhat. And he had a gentle, playful manner, too, and a pleasant, quiet way of saying humorous things, and altogether was such a very charming person that she gave him the preference from the first, and grew to love him deeply before she had any idea that such was the case. He was only her cousin.

She was at first very careful in her behaviour to the two to show no marked preference for either. But each of them before long saw perfectly well how the matter stood.

The old people of course guessed nothing of it; if they had, it would have given them only a temporary uneasiness. Her father was so inexorably certain of her destiny that nothing could have disturbed his certainty; the car of Juggernaut is not to be turned aside by a stick. And the poor young lady was well aware of what awaited her, and but for this appearance of Lionel in these autumn days, would have looked forward with extreme pleasure to that destiny.

Lionel was roused from his lethargy of life by this newly-found love, and he formed a scheme, a foolish lover's scheme.

"If she will be constant for a year or two, I will win a position for her. There is, at all events, India."

Alas, poor youth! he should have known that he would get no nearer to the moon by going to India than he would to his cousin Alice.

As the autumn drew towards a close, she began to relax a little in the extreme care with which she had kept the balance between them, and somewhat to unbend towards Lionel. Edward hating with a deep and deadly hatred, watched them closely, and saw the growing hope in Lionel's eyes.

"The fool will not be long before he speaks."

Lionel was not long before he spoke. One day she was distant and cold to him, and in asking an explanation of this coldness

he determined to say the great word to her, to lay his life at her feet, to pray her to wait.

He found her alone. Had he not been nervous, had he but looked a little more at her face, he would have seen that she was very angry, and would not have spoken. To his great astonishment she repelled him with extreme anger. Before there was any time to ask for an explanation, the father and mother entered, the father livid with rage.

"Then my watching is rewarded," said the old gentleman, "I was not deceived. Wretched Lionel, how have you abused my confidence and violated my hospitality! Lionel, you have traded on your familiarity as a cousin in a base and cowardly way."

"My lord," said Lionel, "may I be allowed to tell you what has just passed before I leave your house for ever? I have just proposed to my cousin."

"This is mighty well," said the old man, "wondrous well, my young lady."

"Do hear me, my lord," said Lionel. "I wish you to blame the right person. I am alone to blame. My cousin has rejected me with scorn. For heaven's sake understand that in your anger."

The old man's hand went round the daughter's waist as he turned to Lionel.

"Nephew," he said, "you are a gentleman. No one is more sorry than myself that this has happened through my carelessness. But my daughter, you see, knows her duty."

Alice herself turned and spoke to him.

"I cannot believe you utterly lost to all honour. Read this letter and clear yourself. If you choose, you can write to me in explanation. We have seen each other for the last time."

She tossed a letter towards him, but it fell close to where she was standing. Her father made a dart to get it, but she put her foot upon it and waved him imperiously off. My lord obeyed. There were traditions in his family, and he, like many of his order, was the slave of tradition. The women of his house had the hereditary character of being easily managed and tractable when led; but fierce and desperately vindictive when driven. There were unfortunately two or three ugly stories in the history of the family to confirm this tradition; and my lord let the letter lie on the floor.

Edward picked the letter up and read it. The passage which concerned him was this:—

"Your sweet cousin Lionel was dining at the mess of the

140th last night, and used your name in a scandalously public manner. He toasted you in the very coarsest terms, and spoke of you as his *fiancée*. My brother told me this this morning. I hoped that your cousin had been drunk, but Georgey says he was perfectly sober.

“Yours ever lovingly,

“CLARA BRABAZON.”

Clara Brabazon was an intimate friend of Alice's. Her brother, the “Georgey” of this letter, was a pleasant, kind young cornet of dragoons. That the blow was Edward's Lionel was certain. It was Edward who had got the foul lie written; it was Edward who had set the old people to watch. But the blow had come through George Brabazon; he must have an explanation from him, and the whole thing would come out. He wrote a peremptory letter to the cornet, stating that he had been making unfounded assertions with regard to him, and demanding a public apology. Alas! the letter which he wrote in his indignation was a little too peremptory for that regiment and for those times. George Brabazon was advised, which meant *ordered*, by his brother officers, directed, I fear, by the colonel, to send a man to Lionel for an explanation. The fatal step was taken, no arrangement was possible now. And so they met, the kindly Lionel and the merry, popular young cornet.

Lionel said most solemnly to his dying day that he never meant to hit the cornet, but only fired nervously towards him, with some vague instinct of self-defence. However that may be, and I believe it, the instant after he fired the poor young man, after staring round him for one moment, with a ghastly look of horror, fell down in a heap upon the grass, dead!

Lionel's horror and remorse were terrible to witness. The habits of reserve and repression in which people of his order were then educated, gave way utterly. He lost the self-possession of an English gentleman, and raved and imprecated curses upon himself so fiercely that the officers who stood around began to get more scared at him than they were at the solemn and beautiful corpse which lay at their feet. But there was the necessity of flight, even in those days: and when Lionel appeared at midnight beside the bed of his startled father, he was calm, though he looked five or six years older.

His father had a plan for him, and they talked it over for to-morrow. His father was poor, and he sincerely regretted that he had no provision or career to offer his son, worthy of a gentleman, in this country. But many gentlemen were doing well in

New South Wales, at the wool-growing. Did he think that he could bring his mind to entertain such an idea?

"You tell me that England has grown hateful to you after these miserable occurrences, my poor boy. Try to forget them in business."

"I would gladly go," he said, "but we have no money."

"I will lend you five thousand pounds of your mother's, bearing interest. If you succeed, you can pay her again; if you lose it all, why it will be gone, and you will have nothing left but our love and our blessing. Those you will always have. You have been a good son to us, and God bless you."

And so he sailed; and the world went on and forgot him utterly. His cousin Alice married a young nobleman of vast wealth, the Marquis of Granton, in her first season, and became one of the first ladies in the land.

In Australia, year glides into year, and one almost undistinguishable season fades into another, and time, divided and unmarked by events, goes on with equal pace. The years are not *marked* as with us, by the snows and frosts of Christmas, or by leafless trees. In winter there the grass is greener than the trees; in summer the trees, though remaining the same colour, are greener than the grey dried grass. That is all the change, except some little in temperature.

Ten years had gone over Lionel's head, and he was a steady, rich, sedate magistrate of three-and-thirty before he could believe such a thing possible.

He was wealthy even for the wealthy community in which he lived. Besides his vast flocks of sheep, he had made some singularly bold and lucky investments in town lands. He had no genius for commerce, but he was a steady, contemplative, quiet man, who did not care about making money, and still his money grew. He had no partner, but lived alone, about 250 miles from town.

A very pleasant place was this solitary station of his, ten miles from the next neighbours. A creek, overarched by vast white-stemmed trees, running in a deep glen cut out of the table-land, wandered on between the forest and the plain, and in one of the pleasantest of its bends his house was placed overlooking it. The house stood quite by itself, in the midst of a beautiful garden, which grew everything, from gooseberries to peaches. The great outbuildings, which were necessary for his wool and his men, were a quarter of a mile off. He had a quiet place.

The time did not go unpleasantly to him. He had his books, carefully added to year after year; and what is more, he read

them. He had his newspapers and magazines in those days three months after date. He had expeditions to Sydney, at that time even growing to be a beautiful place; and long rides over plain and through forest, after his business. Last, and not least, he had his sporting.

He got to be the greatest sportsman of those parts. His "run," as they call the ground occupied under lease from Government by a squatter, was a vast stretch of country, twenty-five miles by twenty; nearly all bare, rich, level plain, at a considerable elevation above the sea, almost entirely without wood, and only marked here and there by two or three grass-grown extinct volcanoes, which rose perhaps three or four hundred feet above the level of the table-land. It was one of the richest "runs" in those parts, keeping a sheep to every three acres, but it was a very bad sporting run. There were many lakes upon it, swarming with waterfowl, from the gigantic pelican and black swan, down to the tiny grey grebe; but it was a bad country for sport. He hardly ever fired a gun on his own run, save at the ducks, and more particularly at one other species of game, which I shall notice directly.

But his house stood at the very edge of his run, close to the "plough line" which separated him from his neighbours. And behind his house began the great forests of which his neighbours' run consisted. These forests, at first open, that is to say, formed by large trees without underwood, rolled up into a densely-thicketed (scrubby) region of greater elevation—a wilderness of flowers, a paradise of game; at that time, merely a wild labyrinth of rocky gullies, or little glens, where the virgin gold lay about on the surface, shining, after each shower, out of the red clay which formed the soil, like the window of a jeweller's shop. Afterwards this very hunting-ground of Lionel's held a population of thirty thousand souls; now, like the "Fiery Creek," for instance, it has nearly returned to its original solitude. Nobody was more amused than himself when he heard of the vast treasures which his old hunting-ground had yielded, from the surface and from a few feet deep.

To show that one does not exaggerate, I myself knew well a tract of low-lying forest ranges, at the foot of Mount Cole, in Victoria, utterly desolate and uninhabited, a place to which our lost sheep wandered and died of foot-rot. I saw that same tract of country *after* it had supported a population of 50,000 souls, and was still supporting about 10,000. With gold, however, we have nothing to do, and only with hunting for a specific purpose.

For these upland gullies—all a-blossom in spring with

Grevilleas, *Epacris*, and innumerable other beautiful flowers (the exquisite series of Australian orchids trampled under one's horse's feet unnoticed)—these sparsely timbered flower-gardens became his hunting-ground. They lay higher than the great forest, but not high enough to get the fresh breeze from the mountain, which still towered above and beyond them: and in spring and early summer they were hot, bright, happy sorts of places, smelling not unlike an old-fashioned walled garden in England. Nobody ever went there; there was nothing to attract the cattle or the sheep, for the soil was bare of grass, showing the red clay everywhere through the flowers, and the gold too, had any one had eyes to see it: and "shikarees" (like the late Mr. Wheelwright, the "old bushman" of the Field), did not exist in Australia in those days. It was an utterly desolate region, and Lionel himself only rode into it accidentally on one occasion, when he was steering for his head-station by compass.

He often came again. Your horse could not go fast in consequence of the abruptness of the gullies and the denseness of the flowering shrubs, and you seldom rode far in a contemplative mood, without becoming dimly aware of a presence, and an eye; and, on looking more carefully, finding that you were within a few yards of a great grey (or sometimes red) kangaroo, sitting up like a small donkey on its hind-legs, and going away, click, click, fifteen miles an hour as soon as you noticed it. Then, again, coming round the corner of a belt of shrubbery, you would come on a knot of birds, standing from six to eight feet high, which, after examining you, would get a panic, and race away twenty miles an hour—Emus to wit. Parrots—why thicker than sparrows and linnets in England; cockatoos, lorekeets; *Scansores* innumerable, sulphur-crested, rose-crested, black and red, black and yellow, beyond telling; eagles, larger than any European species, would come from the great blue overhead and almost brush your ear with their wings; and alighting on a bare bough close by, would sit and watch you. Snakes? why, unfortunately, yes; some almost steel-coloured, gliding softly among the flowers; others more deadly and more horrible, lying with their soft bodies fitting to the ground as if they had grown there, and only raising their flat unutterably wicked heads as you passed. Monster lizards, five, ay, and seven feet long; other lizards of all colours; one a mass of evil horns and wings (the "Moloch"). For the rest—scorpions, centipedes, ridiculously fantastic beetles; *Mantidæ*, like straws and sticks and leaves, which crawled on your blankets if you camped there; and stinging ants, with a grievance against the rest of animated nature, always promptly

revenge. A "paradise," as I said, in the sense in which old Xenophon * uses the word. In another sense of the word, it was a "paradise" to Lionel. One of the *spécialités* of his order for all time has been that of the destruction of wild animals. From the hero of the *Ter centum millia perdicum* in "Sartor Resartus," up to — K.G., statesman and sportsman, it has always been the same. Lionel did not belong to the school who are shocked at the killing of poor innocent dumb animals; in fact, the school scarcely existed then, certainly not in that part of the world; for I greatly fear that some animals by no means dumb had been shot down in those parts; and though Lionel's hands were clean, he was an exception. Sport of some kind was one of the traditions of the order, and he found sport in these secondary gullies which lay under the great dominating mountains, and followed it.

In his own way. At first he took the usual course which is followed in the colonies, and had dogs, half-bred greyhounds, for the kangaroos, but he lost half of them; then he tried on many occasions to ride down emus on his best horses, but he lamed his horses, lost his emus, and once had a serious accident against a tree himself. He put his wits to work. Stalking was quite impossible on account of the snakes, but in those early times any kind of game would allow the close approach of a horse; while, in consequence of their being used to an attack by natives, no kind of game in any way worth having would allow the approach of a man on foot. He got himself a carbine, and looked about for a horse who would stand the firing of this same carbine from his back.

His stock horses, the horses employed in driving in his cattle, being used to the stock-whip, which makes a report like a pistol, could be got to stand it after a time. But stock horses do not do for sporting purposes. One leg among four of them is a good average. He took his youngest and best horse, and carefully trained him to standing fire. He got some terrible falls, but the British aristocracy, though, as some say, wanting in all the cardinal virtues, have never been accused of having less pluck than other folks, and he persevered. He got a high-bred young horse to stand fire, after which he had splendid sport. He would ride up to a kangaroo, and shoot it dead with a single bullet from his carbine; he would ride into a flock of turkeys (bustards) on his own plains, and with the reins on his spirited young horse's neck, would pick off three or four before the foolish creatures thought it time to move.

* παραδεισος.

So far. He vegetated on here with his accumulating wealth, with his books, his business, and his sport, and there was but little to disturb him. Old memories were getting very dim; and the most painful parts of them, with the dark exception of his most unhappy duel, were getting so mellowed by time as to be almost pleasant. So when he, after five years' vegetation, got the intelligence that his cousin, the Honourable Edward Hornby, had come into the colony, and had been made inspector of police for the southern district (Victoria was a mere district then, though central now), he did not care very much. It was all over and done with so many years ago, and the sun had gone to sleep with her last light upon the peaceful eastern hills so often. In that land of untellable melancholy peace called Australia, the setting of the sun—a peaceful event everywhere—is more peaceful, more calm, possibly more beautiful, than in any other country in the world. Once see for yourself those dim, lonely, long-drawn plains of grey grass, and see the sunlight die on the solitary wooded peak which stands out from them twenty miles away, and then you will know what I mean. Lionel had seen this awful sunset spectacle every day for five years, and he said, "Who am I, that the sun should go down on my wrath?"

He had met Edward Hornby at sessions, with an open brow and an open hand, two years after he had heard of his being in the colony as police inspector, which was seven years after his own arrival, when he was getting to be a wealthy and well-to-do man. The meeting on his part was cordial, and on that of his cousin's apparently so. But he was very much struck by his cousin's appearance.

He did not look dissipated: all his nerve and vitality were left, but there was a wild, fierce, bandit-look about the man for which he could not in any way account. He asked the head stipendiary magistrate about him in confidence. This officer was a very dear friend of his, and they had a mutual respect for one another.

"It is an awful shame," said the stipendiary magistrate to Lionel; "the Home Government serves us shamefully.* This is a home appointment. This man, this cousin of yours, my dear Lionel, is a desperate man: he has been kicked out of every billiard-room from Brussels to Naples. But his cousin and your cousin, Lady Alice——, married Lord Granton; and so, when Europe is too hot to hold him, he is foisted on us as police inspector. It is too monstrous. We are not strong enough to cast the old country off, but the time will come when we shall be.

* "We have changed all that." I am speaking of old times—"Killing extinct Satans."

You are making your fortune, you have your position, you will go home and go into Parliament. Do for heaven's sake tell the assembled British nation that we are sick already of having ill-reputed cadets thrust upon us in responsible positions. Do for heaven's sake, man, tell them that we are forced to stand it now, but that the time will come when we will stand it no longer."

Lionel saw but little of his cousin after this. When Edward, as inspector of police, came his way, he was always absent from the bench. The last time—save two—he ever saw him was at a fancy ball at Government House. Edward was dressed as a bandit, and Lionel was obliged to agree that he looked the part to perfection.

Now one has to explain again, for we fear that few of our readers know the meaning of the word "bushranger."

The first bushrangers were escaped convicts from Sydney. Bushranging began almost as soon as the Blue Mountains were crossed and the great interior opened; making the strict police, possible while the colony was confined to the eastward of that mountain chain, now impossible. After this, bushranging spread far and wide: more to the north, towards the Hunter and Clarence at first; but afterwards, as the flocks went south, into the most outlying districts in that direction. The object of these bushrangers was to avenge themselves on the society which they had once defied, by new crimes; and if you will take the newest digest of the criminal laws, and run your eye down the list of crimes, you will find not one which they did not commit. Such were the first generation of bushrangers. The second were hardly so brutal; but, strange to say, young men whose fathers had been convicts, but who were reformed and were doing well—getting rich indeed—joined this second generation of bushrangers from mere love of adventure and of old association. I date the second generation of bushrangers at 1830; what shall we say of 1865—of the *third* generation—when no road in New South Wales was safe, and when the *grandsons* of the original convicts join the bushrangers and defy the police? On one occasion, in 1865, they actually held a town for two days and gave a ball, at which the policemen were obliged to dance. If it is so in 1865, what must it have been in 1830? Is it at all surprising that the feeling of the respectable colonists like Lionel Horton, with the dread of horrors to which those of the sack of St. Sebastian are child's play, hanging over them, should be one of intense wrath, bordering on ferocity.

In his quiet southern home, with his flocks grazing far across the plains, and the *stolos* of old, quiet, good-humoured, contented London pickpockets and forgers around him, he had troubled him-

self but little about these bushrangers. His people were all rogues and convicts. He knew that very well ; but they were not men who had been convicted of violent crimes, with the exception of one, who had fired a loaded pistol at his colonel at Gibraltar, because the colonel had refused to let him marry.* This would-be murderer was a great friend of Lionel's. On the whole, he felt perfectly safe about his people.

"I debauched my moral sense among these people, you know," he said once to Lady Granton, whilom his cousin Alice. "They didn't care anything for me, though I was a magistrate. I assure you these people are much nicer than your people. Take yourself, for instance : you are supposed to know everybody ; but you don't know anybody who has robbed a goldsmith, and is perfectly ready to tell you all about it. And you are supposed to know the world. Oh ! my poor cousin."

It was about the eighth year of his calm sojourn in these quiet solitudes, that there came a noise or report from the north, dim and vague at first, and clouded with a mist of incidents and anecdotes which the younger folks took to be original, but which the older hands recognised as mere replicas of old stories. But, in spite of the surrounding mist of old stories reproduced, the noise or report began to shape itself into form, and at last crystallised itself into certainty. There was a great gang of bushrangers abroad ; by rumour more numerous, more bold, more cunning, and more cruel than any which had appeared on the continent. One had to go to the legends of the neighbouring island of Van Diemen's Land to match them for strength and for ferocity.

There was little doubt about their leader : he had been seen many times, and could be sworn to by a hundred mouths—no less a person than Mike Howe, the baby-killer of Van Diemen's Land. This was not true : Howe never went into the bush on the mainland, as far as I can gather. But that awful name was sufficient to cause a panic among the outlying settlers, and many of the outlying squatters (country gentlemen) removed their books and their wives, and went to Sydney, leaving ex-convict overseers to make the best bargain they could with the terrible bandit.

A fearful bandit he was. The foulest, fellest, and fiercest with which the land had ever been plagued. The three types of bush-

* A fact. A *difficult* man, but not what I should call an *awkward* man. You had to smooth him the right way. If he threw down his pack or his tools, you must leave him alone. If you had gone about further with him, I should suspect that he would become dangerous. I never tried the experiment, and so the reader has the present story.

rangers which came most naturally to one's memory are those represented by Mike Howe, Rocky Whelan, and Melville. Michael Howe was a handsome devil—a man beside whom Nana Sahib appears only as an enraged patriot with a personal grievance. He took the child from the mother's breast, and beat its brains out against a tree. Rocky Whelan was a feller devil even than this—a murderer from sheer love of seeing his victim die. Melville was different to either of them, and by far the most remarkable. A smallish man, the son of a Scotch clergyman, of the most intense vitality, with a courage of the most transcendent order. A man utterly without fear; not, as far as I know, either cruel or unclean, but a man whose whole soul was, for no reason whatever, in utter rebellion against order, law, society; nay, I fear against God Himself. The man could never have shed blood, or he would have been hanged without mercy. He was never hanged, for there never was anything against him worse than highway robbery. He was under sentence for something like thirty years, when, in one of his mad attempts to escape from the hulk, he got drowned.

This last man is a puzzle to me still. I would give much to have a talk to him. I had a chance once; I might have got near the man. But who can undertake to talk with a man mad in two-thirds of his soul, in flat rebellion against society and her ministers, tearing furiously at his iron bars like a hungry disappointed tiger.

The three types of bushrangers which I have roughly sketched out were all of them well represented in this new bandit leader. As cruel as Howe, as brutal as Whelan, as irrepressibly fierce and restless as Melville. Marks was his name; a very tall man, with a large black beard. His whole history became perfectly well known afterwards. He was a manufacturer's son at Bradford or Leeds; and, maddened by some disappointment in love, took to every kind of evil course, and having ended in forgery, was transported. He had become for some time apparently respectable in Van Diemen's Land, where he was free; but the devil, which he had originally invited, came for another visit, and stayed. The man became Berserk, and went to the bush, with seven new devils in his company. The history of the man, and the man's person even, were, be it remembered, as well known to the criminal population as that of Governor Gipps.

He was one of the "uncatchable" class of bushrangers. His gang was "broken up" several times, and many of them captured and hanged; but no man ever laid hands on him. He exhibited

some of the qualities of a Garibaldi (if I dare use that sacred and loved name on such an occasion) in his Guerilla warfare. Although a big man, and "an expensive man to horse," he always rode the finest cattle in the colony, far finer than it was possible for any of his pursuers to ride. No fine weight-carrying horse was safe from him. Five hundred pounds' worth of horse-flesh, in the person of one horse, might be neighing in your paddock at sunset, and at sunrise the slip-rails would be down, and the horse gone. And, again, the man was such a dead shot with a pistol, that few policemen of any rank dared ride too near him. He held the colony in terror, and got more audacious day after day.

Terror gave place to mad though powerless exasperation after the following incidents:—Captain Thompson, of the 50th, one of the most popular men in the whole colony, a man respected and beloved by the Governor, the military, the colonists, and the convicts alike, once more succeeded in breaking up this man's gang; but in hunting the well-mounted leader himself, he got separated from his party. These two men had evidently met face to face in the bush, and with the saddest consequences. Captain Thompson, being followed by some of his victorious party, was found dead in the bush beside his dead horse, shot through the lungs. From this time that fierce and fearful bully, the Honourable Edward Hornby, publicly devoted himself to the especial task of riding down this bushranger and shooting him.

"A task well suited to him," dreamed Lionel, one wet night, over his lonely fire. "He has done little good in the world as yet, though as much as I, perhaps. God utilises all His creatures, sooner or later."

But the "sensation" in the colony about the death of Captain Thompson was mild to the sensation which followed the capture of Inspector the Honourable Edward Hornby, J.P., by the bush-rangers. There was no doubt of the fact: the Honourable Edward had ridden too far, and had been too bold; and they had got him, and, what is more, meant to keep him. They let their intentions be known to Government by sending into the Goulburn police-station a wicked-looking little old shepherd, with one eye, and lame, who stated their terms as these: "£500 down, and a free pardon for all, or we'll do all to him as we meant to do to O——,* if we had caught him before he was dead."

* A most unpopular officer among the convicts. What is said to have happened after his death is of course untellable here. It is, on the whole, as well that the laws of modern literature make it possible to forget the extent to which human ferocity and brutality can go.

CHAPTER II.

THERE was a general cackle and shriek throughout the colony. The *Sentinel*, in its leader, pointed out that here was an active police magistrate, a scion of the British aristocracy, in the full possession of health and strength, set on by a gang of ruffians in broad daylight, and held to ransom. It demanded whether or no one had not better live in Spain or the south of Italy, than in a country like theirs, nominally free, and with all the vast power of the British empire at its back ; and then clearly traced the whole accident to the levelling tendencies of the party who wished for cheap land. The *Mohawk* replied by saying that he agreed with the *Sentinel* that Spain, Italy, or even South Carolina was a better country to live in than Australia as long as eight hundred men were allowed to keep a million acres desolate for their own selfish purposes, and that the thing never would have happened had the lands been unlocked before, and a population of British hearts and hands been allowed to form themselves into self-defensive communities, at every point where soil and communication offered an opportunity. The *Mohawk*, after an intense and almost frantic manifesto of loyalty to the British crown—and I do not think that any one is more intensely loyal to the present dynasty than your thorough-going colonial Radical—went on to say that he could not see that the fact of this individual inspector being a scion of the British aristocracy made much difference in the case. The British aristocracy had a good notion of taking care of themselves. Let this man's aristocratic friends ransom him. The *Mohawk* was never inclined to come down hard on a man who had got in a mess ; but he could not help saying that, considering what the Honourable Edward Hornby had done for the colony, and looking at his private character, the figure set on his head by the bushrangers was considerably over the market price.

So the *Sentinel* and *Mohawk* made political capital out of this accident. But the Government were dreadfully puzzled. Lionel, who, in spite of oblivion, strongly disliked his cousin, rode to town and urged action on the Colonial Secretary and the Governor. He told them at once that they need never ask the council for the money ; that he would pay the sum five times over out of his own pocket to release his cousin. He urged them to action on that basis, but the Governor and the Colonial Secretary "hung in the wind," and showed a great hesitation in "going about." "He is perfectly safe," said his Excellency ; "you yourself, my dear Lionel, would never play out a solitary trump without a single

court card in your hand. The bushrangers have got a poor hand and one trump; they will never play it until they are forced." And the secretary said in the ante-room, "We will try to deal with them for you, only the free-pardon business must be dropped. I know how fond you are of your cousin, and how deeply attached your cousin is to you. I have heard him speak of you. I perfectly well know the relations between you, and see how generously and high-mindedly you are acting. But I wish your cousin was a more respectable man. We may get him back, but the devil himself will never put his accounts right. You really must wait."

"Are his accounts seriously wrong?" asked Lionel.

"Over four hundred pounds," answered the Secretary, sadly. "He is a *mauvaise sujet*. He will lose his appointment, I fear; and he is so brutal, so wild, and so fierce, that he is getting unfit for decent society. My dear Lionel, I am sorry to say so to you, but your cousin is a ruffian."

"Now, I'll tell you what I will do with you," said Lionel to the Colonial Secretary (Prime Minister), "if you will get him back I will pay his ransom and set his accounts right. Will you do the other half for me, and give these pardons?"

"I honestly don't think that we will. You heard the Governor say that he was quite safe. Can his Excellency err? Go along! go along!"

So they hesitated in action, and meanwhile noises and rumours went on full swing. The *Sentinel*, "shut up" by the unanswerable *Mohawk*, was daily pathetic about the scion of the oldest and most respectable aristocracy in Europe. The *Mohawk* aired the British aristocracy also, denying, however, both their antiquity and their respectability, and attributing the whole accident to the want of cheap land (by no means a bad argument, mind), and to the refusal of that universal suffrage, which they got a few years after, and which, leaving them nothing to fight for, reduced the sale of their paper by one-half. On one point over this singular accident they had, what their younger gentlemen would have called "a mutual field of generous rivalry"; that is to say, in "sensation" paragraphs. When the *Sentinel* was informed, by one of our greatest stock-dealers, whom it was superfluous to name, just arrived in the course of business from the Edwards (meaning, I believe, little Goby), that "our missing inspector" had been tied naked, hand and foot, and alive, on an ants' nest, and had been then and there bitten and stung to death by those ferocious crustaceans, with which we are all familiar on our domestic hearths; when the *Sentinel* came out with this piece of

blague the *Mohawk* was promptly down on them with another. "The old lady of Castlereagh Street' (we need not say that we allude to our respected contemporary the *Sentinel*) is, as usual, entirely in error about the sad fate of 'our missing inspector.' An intelligent native king (King Tapto, of Shepherd's Crossing) has just come into our office, after having witnessed the expiring agonies of the scion of British aristocracy. His majesty was attired in his usual court costume of a blue coat and brass buttons, and, with the exception of the Government brass plate on the pit of his stomach, had no other clothing of any sort or kind whatever. *He* says that he saw Inspector Hornby burnt alive with iron bark chips on the fifth of last month; in which case the pismire story of the *Sentinel* falls to the ground utterly. And, although we will not yield in loyalty to our dear old lady the *Sentinel*, yet she is hardly in a position to deny all due respect to royal utterances. His Majesty King Tapto's demand for tobacco was promptly answered by one of our young gentlemen. His demand for brandy was referred to our editor, now out of town."

Before all this "chaff" had died away, Edward Hornby came back to town, ragged and footsore, in a red shirt and moleskin trousers, and resumed his position as police-inspector. His cousin Lionel, through the instrumentality of the Colonial Secretary, had his affairs put right, and in such a way that Edward never knew who had done it. All that Edward ever said about the matter was that the bushrangers were kind to him, and that he had escaped, but he was never safe until he got near town.

Lionel went back to his station. His people were glad to see him again, and there seemed to be no *arrière-pensée* about any of them, save one—the man *he* called the murderer; the man who had tried to shoot his colonel at Gibraltar. This man was reserved. This man knew something. He would meet Lionel's eye freely enough, but in a very inquiring way. Lionel saw that this man's expression was interrogatory, and that the interrogation was, "How much do you know?"

I am sorry to say that he liked this ruffian. If you have ever tried the lonely bush for yourself for a few years, and would afterwards honestly confess to us all about the uncommonly queer people whom you have to like in that beautiful but unutterably melancholy solitude, you would tell us a most interesting story. I remember, for instance, a man called Wills—originally, I believe, from Pentonville on his good behaviour—who was a very pleasant companion, and taught me first how to crack a stock-whip. He was a very pleasant companion. That gentleman has now, I am

given to understand, produced such an additional complication in his dealings with civilised society that the only view he can get of one of our noble colonial prisons is from the inside. But he was not bad company. Lionel's friend, the would-be murderer, was, I am sorry to say, the most trustworthy man about the place. The others all lied; this man, ruffian as he was, never did that.

I should hesitate to say this if I did not know that I was speaking the truth. If I was generalising I would not say what I have said; but having my man and my facts before me I am safe. This man watched Lionel about everywhere, in the woolshed, in the sheep-yards, in the stable, and his look always said one thing—"How much do you know?"

At last they spoke. Some sheep were lost in the scrubby ranges, the hunting-grounds of Lionel, after a gale from the south-west, and Lionel took this man with him on horseback. When they were alone together, Lionel said:

"You have something to say to me, Jordan. I have seen it in your eyes for days."

And Jordan said, "I have nothing to ask of you save one thing—how much do you know?"

"About what?"

"Well, you are a gentleman, and would not have me murdered; and there is no one to hear us but the parrots, and *they* won't peach, though *they* can talk. About this bushranger captain?"

"He is alive and well. Beyond that I know nothing of him."

"That will do. Don't say a word more. But mind this, governor. I am the only real old hand you have round you; and I went near death for a girl once, and I would go near death for you. If you know anything more than you have chose to tell me, don't let it out among those twopenny clyfakers and prigs up at home. There is orders among convicts, I tell you. The bigger the sentence the higher the station. You haven't got more than a seven-year man among the lot up except me, and I'm a lifer. A man who has his seven penn'orth, or his fourteen penn'orth, unless he accumulates in the colony, is only used by such men as me as a ticket porter. We make 'em fetch and we make 'em carry, but in a business like this we never trust 'em—don't you."

"In a business like this?" said Lionel. "What do you mean?"

"That is no odds of yours. Only if you know anything, don't

you talk. *We* know. And you are free from us. So Marks is alive and well, is he ? ”

“ As far as I know,” said Lionel. “ I wish you would speak out.”

“ Do you see that there ants’ nest ? ” said the convict.

“ I see it.”

“ The day I want to be tied naked on that ants’ nest, is the day I’ll speak out,” said the convict. “ Not before. But if Marks comes near us, I’ll follow you. You are a queer lot, you swells. You are queerer than us. What the dickens would become of you with our temptations, I don’t know.”

It appeared, however, that the bushranger was either dead or most suddenly and unaccountably quiescent. For five months no outrage of any kind was reported from any quarter. At the end of that time Inspector Hornby received intelligence of Marks being in hiding in the mountains in the South ; and getting leave, started immediately in pursuit.

He was not, however, quick enough to catch him. He made the vermin bolt, however ; for two days after his arrival in those parts Marks reappeared, fifty miles to the south of him, and sacked a station. Inspector Hornby was almost immediately seen on the spot, but Marks was again too quick for him. A very few days after, another station was sacked (“ stuck up ” as they called it), twenty miles further to the south, and within fifteen miles of Lionel’s.

He had no women about the place, and could easily have ridden to town and let Jordan the convict make terms for him, but he would not. He determined to stick to his post as a magistrate, and do his duty firmly.

He rode always armed with his carbine, on his well-trained young horse, and when armed and mounted thus he was a very formidable adversary for any two or three men. Jordan always rode with him now, also armed.

A week passed, and nothing more was heard. Inspector Hornby arrived one night at his cousin’s station. He was shaved perfectly smooth, and showed every line in his powerful, coarse, and violent face most unpleasantly. Not an agreeable-looking man at all. They had not met since his captivity, and he thanked Lionel in a manly, straightforward way for his exertions towards his release ; of other obligations to him he knew nothing. He went away smooth shorn in the morning, in spite of Lionel’s remonstrances on his danger, entirely alone, and rode off into the bush towards the mountain.

At mid-day there came a young mounted policeman, a stranger

to that part of the country, asking to be guided in a certain direction. The way lay through some very abrupt, remote, and densely-timbered gullies, on the old hunting-ground, which had struck Lionel as a very likely place for the haunt of the bush-rangers. He communicated this to the trooper, and, having dined him, set out with him on horseback, accompanied by Jordan. Lionel had of course his carbine—Jordan pistols.

The ranges in which these gullies were situated were densely wooded, except in one or two places, where, on a spur which flanked one of the little glens, there would be an open, lofty place, of a few acres, free from timber, and just now blazing with flowers. With these exceptions, the forest was dense.

Coming to the most suspicious gully, and feeling themselves tolerably strong, they determined to give it some sort of a cursory examination. The trooper was to go on one side and they two on the other. There was no sign of the enemy whatever. The trooper rode round the upper end of the gully, with his sword dangling and his carbine on his knee, and very soon was pushing on through the dense scrub, on the opposite ridge, about three hundred yards from them.

They had gone about a quarter of a mile in this order, when something terrible, sudden, and unforeseen occurred. From among some dense acacia bushes there came a little flame of fire, and a puff of smoke. By the time the report reached them, even at that short distance, the poor trooper was lying motionless on the ground, and his horse had started madly off homeward with an empty saddle.

They were well concealed, and Lionel felt Jordan's hand on his arm.

"Be perfectly still," he whispered, "and watch."

There appeared from behind the bushes the murderer of the trooper. A very tall man with a great black beard, dressed in a red shirt, a cabbage-tree hat (like a sailor's straw hat), breeched and booted, most beautifully mounted, and carrying a pistol ready for use in his hands.

"That is Marks," whispered Jordan, in an excited manner. "Can't you cut him over?"

"Not from here," said Lionel, in a whisper. "It is three hundred yards off, and my carbine is not rifled."

"Watch him for a moment," said the convict, "and then follow me."

The bushranger came out into the sunlight, and pulled up his horse to look for one instant at the body of the murdered trooper; then he turned his horse to the right, down the glen, and rode

on at a foot pace, through the aromatic shrubbery, which brushed as high as his knees, looking around him defiantly yet cautiously.

The other two turned their horses' heads the same way as his, and kept parallel to him on the opposite ridge, but behind it, out of sight, and trotting. At a particular point, among some thick green scrub, Jordan laid his hand on Lionel's arm and turned his horse's head. Lionel saw that this was the place to wait for their man, now coming down the gully on the opposite ridge. The gully narrowed here, and it was evident from the rocks that the bushranger must come into the bottom, or even cross towards them; and on the opposite side was one of those bald, heathy, flowery spaces which I have noticed before. Up all around the forest rose sombre and silent.

They waited but a few minutes when he emerged from the denser forest, riding at a foot pace and loading a pistol; little dreaming, poor wretch, of the fate before him. Lionel was determined to arrest this man in one way or another. Five minutes before, just after he had seen him murder the trooper, he would have shot him down like a dog. But his temper had a little cooled, even in that short time, and he was no assassin. He got his carbine ready, his reins over his left arm, and waited.

The bushranger came slowly on among the flowers, which reached to his knee, gaudy with his red shirt under the blazing sun in the open. His horse turned down a cattle track under the rocks towards them. A vivid, gaudy figure, even among the gaudy flowers—a figure never forgotten by Lionel to the day of his death.

"He is near enough now," said the convict, in a fierce whisper. "Fire."

"I cannot fire without challenging," said Lionel, quietly.

"Fool!" hissed out the convict; but Lionel did not mind. He rode quietly into the open, and, with his reins over his left arm, and his carbine at the "present," said, in a voice which rung through the peaceful summer forest—

"Stand, in the king's name!"

The answer was only an ill-aimed pistol-shot. The bushranger hurriedly spurred his horse onwards; but Lionel had covered him with his inexorable unerring carbine. Under these circumstances he felt it his duty to society to take human life; and, keeping his foresight moving to correspond with the undulations of the horse, he fired, and raised a ghost which was never to be laid again.

The bushranger pitched heavily forward on his horse's neck,

and then fell off on the left side, the side nearest to Lionel, the right leg hanging on the saddle for one moment, until the last spasm had kicked the foot clear of the right stirrup : then the man toppled headlong over, and lay perfectly still, as still as his innocent victim had laid not ten minutes before, and was lying even now.

Lionel's practice with turkeys and kangaroos had served him in good stead. He had ridded the earth of a foul and cruel fiend. It was mighty well. But the old unutterable horror which he had felt after killing poor Coronet Brabazon in his unfortunate duel was strong upon him now, and he shivered as though in an ague fit.

"By G—!" he said, turning to his companion, "*I have killed another man.*"

"You meant to, didn't you?" said his convict friend.

"No! no! no! a hundred thousand times 'No.' I call God to witness that I would give my own life twenty times, and fifty years of purgatory, to bring that poor corpse lying there to life again. It was the hunting instinct. I never meant it. I will swear——"

"Swear at me, if you want to swear," said the convict; "but stop that particular kind of noise just now. You have just done your duty to society and to law as a magistrate in a most honourable manner. The law is with you, equity is with you, and as for public opinion, *that* will crown you with roses. But you have lost your nerve, and it is necessary that you should keep it. You have done a thing a thousand times more awful than you think it to be. If you lose your nerve now, you are done for. Shake yourself together. You have shot Marks, the bushranger, haven't you, and earned the thanks of both houses of the legislature?"

With white, dry lips, Lionel said, "Yes."

"Is your nerve sufficiently good to go and look at him?"

"I am not afraid of corpses," said Lionel. "I only fear the ghosts which their memories raise around one."

"I ought to see plenty of ghosts, then," said the convict, "if the memory of all that I have seen, and all that I have heard, is to return in the form of ghosts. But it don't."

"I speak of what you have done," said Lionel. "Have you ever killed a man?"

"Why, no. But stop this talk. We are in awful trouble. Perhaps I am to blame. Confound you, you know you have done right. What are you afraid of? You will find it necessary to keep this business dark, for your own sake, for your own entirely.

I wish to point out to you that you want at this moment every bit of intelligence and nerve of which you are possessed. Leave the horses to graze, and follow me."

Nec coram, &c.—a good old rule. I had meant to describe the scene which followed, but find that I am getting too close to the edge of the unwritten canons which, very properly, confine the licence of modern fictitious literature. Worse accidents than this present one have happened; but little is gained by speaking of them. I have only to say this: When the convict had removed the artificial black beard from the head of the corpse, the face which Lionel saw staring with open eyes out from among the orchids and *Kennydas*, was the face of his cousin Edward! My art might do more for you, but my muse holds up her fingers, as though she were already angry at my licence.

There followed a long watch in the silent summer forest, by one who strode up and down among the flowers, maddened with remorse, interrupted only by the flapping of fierce foul eagles, who perched on the trees near by, disappointed of their feast by a wild man, who walked to and fro, making hideous, foolish, and vain imprecations on his own head. Then, when his faithful convict returned from the station with a spade, there followed a burial; and the eagles, harshly screaming, wheeled aloft, disappointed, into the higher regions of summer twilight, to seek for other prey, and Edward Hornby was buried, and his memory among human folks with him.

Then followed an interview at dead of night between Jordan the convict and Lionel.

"There is no need for you to say nothing at all," said Jordan. "It is done, and can't be undone. If I'd known how you were going to take on about the doing of it, I'd have had it done by some one else. I thought you had a grudge against the man. But it is better kept quiet, and is easy enough kept quiet. Say nothing whatsoever of any sort or kind to any human creature. Lord bless you, things are so easily hushed up in this colony! Your report is that you and me saw a man with a black beard shoot down a trooper without provocation, and that you afterwards, believing him to be the bushranger Marks, with whom you were not personally acquainted, shot him down. Don't say a word more than that. Remember the honour of your family, you know."

"Then you knew it was my cousin disguised?" asked Lionel.

"Bless the man, of course I did!" answered Jordan. "Your cousin was always a bushranger at heart. When he was took by them he see, for the first time, the fun of it, and he and Marks

fell out, and he shot Marks down. Then he got the gang with him, and then he came sneaking into town, promising to come back and lead them. And they wasn't likely to refuse the leadership of a man who sat both sides of the hedge. And I couldn't give you the office; I only thought that you swells were as free among one another as we were. When I found you knew nothing, and thought that you had a grudge against the man, why then, seeing things handy, I put you on the job, and you've done it. But you needn't ride rusty with me, for all that."

"I wish I was dead. I wish I had never been born," was Lionel's answer.

The dear old *Mohawk*, originally started with the programme of putting a spoke in every wheel, of whatever colour, which they saw turning, put their spoke in here. [The *Sentinel* was so vague and feeble over the matter that I only notice it in brackets. It never knew anything more about the business than the *Mohawk*, which was nothing; but it made a washy attempt to generalise from the utterly false facts of the *Mohawk*, which was offensive.] The *Mohawk's* account of the business was this: that a foolish but perfectly harmless scion of the British aristocracy had been thrown accidentally against the poor bushranger, Marks, and had shot him dead. The *Mohawk* had nothing to say against the personal character of the Honourable Lionel Horton, but had only to remind him that private assassination was not exactly the same thing as public justice. If the lands had been unlocked, the *Mohawk* went on to say, such an event could never have occurred, and went on to prove it, which the *Mohawk* did, in a most satisfactory manner to all those who allowed the *Mohawk's* postulates, and so the story evaporated itself into politics. At another place in the *Mohawk's* columns was this paragraph:—

"Inspector Hornby has made a smash of it at last. His latest dodge was bushranger hunting; and now, thank heaven, he seems to have bolted for good, owing the Government a sum which is stated at from £500 to £5,000. We have got rid of him cheaply on the whole. We only hope that Inspectors —, and — and —" [names stated in full, if you please; we don't mince matters in Australia], "may go as cheap as our precious scion of British nobility, Inspector Hornby. The sooner they bolt the better."

So the whole thing went past. Only leaving a fresh horror and a fresh remorse in the heart of a very noble and good man. Young still, but getting grey.

Meanwhile, "Cousin Alice" has perfectly played her rôle as Lady Granton. One supposes that in a marriage of arrangement

like hers, the woman is not always over head and ears in love with the man. In her case it was certainly so. She had been very lately fond of Lionel, and with all the assistance of a strong will and a very careful training, could not always forget him even when she had changed her name. Not that she loved him still, she only kept a memory of him which grew dimmer day by day, and preserved a feeling of tender kindness for him to the end.

Lord Granton probably knew that their marriage was one of arrangement, and that it was dimly possible that there might possibly be some one else who, under other circumstances, might have been preferred to himself. He determined that his imaginary rival, if such a person existed, should have no chance against him. He was clever, handsome, and wealthy, even for England, and he gave all these things to her, and to the task of winning her wholly to himself. There was no resisting the frank, noble generosity of the man. She got to love him better than all the world besides.

She was one of the first leaders of society, and had been so for some ten years—was in fact twenty-nine, in the full radiance of her splendid beauty: caressed in England, courted and flattered by the highest in Europe as wife of the English Extraneous minister—when she gave a party more select and exclusive than she had ever done before, a gold-plate * dinner party; and when everything was ready she sat in the drawing-room with her husband looking a little anxious.

"It is a strange story," said he; "you should certainly let him know the truth. But why did you ask him to-night, of all nights? He will be the only person not in office in the room."

"He was in the Colonial Government. He is an Australian statesman say. The Secretary for the Colonies will know him. And, another thing, I wished to be very ostentatious and grand before *him*."

"I see."

Never having dined with a select party of cabinet ministers and ambassadors, I am unable to say what the thing is like. Lady Granton, however, was a little uneasy at every announcement.

At last. "Mr. Horton!"

Tall, as handsome as ever, very brown in complexion, and slightly grey in hair, though in age only thirty-three; a remarkable man even among the remarkable men present. Such was Lionel as she saw him again after so long.

Of course every one knew him and knew who he was. He was only, after all, in his own order again. He was very charming.

* There are, however, only three sets of gold plate in England.

Australians were more so in those days than now, and he was a little of a lion, even there.

It was late in the evening before Lady Granton got him to herself. She began thus :

"Come and sit near me, we are quite alone here. Lord Granton and myself have been talking over a very old matter to-day, and he is of opinion that I should speak to you frankly and honestly about it. We are older than we were, and possibly wiser. Do you remember a certain painful parting which we had, Cousin Lionel?"

He bowed his handsome grizzled head in reply.

"Also a letter, which I gave you as an excuse for a very rude dismissal?"

Another bow.

"So far, then. Do you remember the writer of that letter, Clara Brabazon?"

"I remember her well."

"Forgive me for giving you pain, dear cousin. Believe me that comfort got from believing untruths is not worth having. Do you know what became of Clara Brabazon?"

"No, cousin."

"Must I tell the whole sad story, then? After—after——"

"After I murdered her brother—yes."

"After that unhappy duel, *the truth about which was carefully concealed from me by my parents*, she got into a state of morbid despair, and soon went into a decline. She sent for me when she was dying, and I went to her. She had a confession to make. She told me she was her brother's murderer. She had loved our mutual cousin Edward with all the fierceness of her nature and her race, and he had discovered it, at the same time that she discovered, or thought she had discovered, that his heart was set in another quarter. You understand me, Cousin Lionel?"

"I do, perfectly."

"These two unhappy people maddened themselves, and one another against you and me; she against me, he against you. He set my parents to watch us; she, at his instigation, wrote that letter about your use of my name in the mess-room, and she confessed to me on her death-bed that it was a falsehood from beginning to end."

"That was the letter which led to the duel," said Lionel, calmly.

"It was. Edward, our cousin, was the cause of the death of poor young Brabazon by his influence over that very foolish and unfortunate woman. According to the wicked laws of society as

they now exist, you had no other choice. I hold you blameless. Edward, with his wicked machinations, was the cause of poor Brabazon's death."

How little did she dream that the hand which had shot down poor Brabazon had also so terribly avenged his death. Lionel saw it now for the first time; but he sat perfectly mute.

"Here is Lord Granton," said she. "We need not drop our conversation; he has perhaps a moment to join us. No; that Neapolitan ambassador has caught him. My dear cousin, I gave an answer on that unhappy morning, I fear, curtly and in anger. I wish you to understand that under any circumstances that answer could have been no other than it was. We, you know, are not free agents. I knew *that* before I was fifteen. I never could have given you any other answer but the one I did give you; only I gave it roughly and rudely, under the impression that you had been playing with my name. Do you forgive me?"

"What I have to forgive, my dear cousin, has been forgiven years ago. If it were otherwise, it is not for a man like me, with the mark of Cain upon my face, shut out from the pale of humanity, and I dread the hope of mercy, to forgive. If I could accept Rome and her doctrines, and buy masses for the dead, I might be happy; but then I cannot, and then, as Carlyle says, 'Thou fool, who told thee that thou wert to be happy?' I'll drag along my chain, cousin: I will try to get nearer to God."

Lady Granton was inexpressibly distressed. Her innocent hand was red with this dreadful business about young Brabazon, for it was she who had shown Lionel the letter, and she knew it. Hers was a rare and fine nature, and time, training, and the world had never deadened her conscience to the fact that the laws of that society which was her atmosphere, almost her religion, were, on the subject of duelling, brutal, barbarous, and unchristian. With the deadly remorse of a very noble nature, shown suddenly to her, she felt it more keenly than ever. But what could she say? It is not *de rigueur* to show emotion in society, more particularly in a room full of ambassadors.

"I am so sorry for you, cousin," was all she allowed herself to say. "God has been so good to me. I am so happy with my husband and my children, and my wealth and influence, that I can only pray, as I do, dear Lionel, that I may be worthy of them."

"I pray much also," said Lionel, quietly; "sometimes for death."

"We must change this conversation," said Lady Granton; and if you please we will never resume it. Go to God, Lionel, go to God."

"I have been ; but He has not heard me.

"Not answered you *yet*, I suppose you mean. Who are you that you should be answered immediately? Go again, and again, and again. Now this conversation must be changed once more. Let us talk of our mutual cousin, Edward. He is in Australia, is he not? How is he getting on?"

"He is dead."

"Dead! How did he die?"

"He was killed."

"Killed! How dreadful. How was he killed?"

"He was shot."

"Shot! Who shot him?"

"I——" said Lionel, calmly; but the French ambassador was bearing down on them, and there was a sudden *bouleversement* in his judgment, so he went on with a sentence which he had never thought of uttering—"am not prepared to say who shot him, but I have the very best reasons for believing that he was shot."

And he carried the terrible secret, so nearly let slip, to his grave with him.

Lady Granton was calmly smiling the next moment.

"My cousin Mr. Lionel Horton, Monsieur G——. My cousin is an Australian statesman, Monsieur G——. They are beginning already, these audacious Australians, to talk of a state down there, under our feet, more powerful than the original unexpandible mother country. Will you take this Australian in hand and convert him from his audacity?"

And looking at the Australian statesman, M. G—— found himself wondering what had caused that statesman to expatriate himself in the first instance, and whether that expatriation was voluntary or involuntary. For Lionel looked so old, so worn, and so strange, that he puzzled good, honest M. G—— completely.

Lionel's father died at last, and he came into such barren honours as were left to that battered and worn-out old line. He clung to his father, and his father to him, to the very last. His magnificent and always accumulating Australian property put the old house on its legs again for a time. He never married nor will marry, and the title dies with him. Lord Poole will die with the deep regrets of the poor, and of all his friends, but he will die with his dread secret close locked in his heart, as mute as a fox.



OUR BROWN PASSENGER.

11

11

OUR BROWN PASSENGER.

DURING the many wanderings and voyages which my brother Edmund and myself have made up and down the earth in search of wealth, we have become tolerably average judges of many things. Furs, slop clothing, tallow, drosky horses, inns, wine, bad money, are but a tithe of the things on which we should be competent to give some sort of opinion ; but there are two things of which it is absolutely necessary that one should have a good judgment—ships and ships' captains, and we consider that there are very few landmen in a position to give us advice on either of these two subjects.

Therefore when it became necessary to choose a ship to make what we determined to be our last voyage, the different ships which were honoured with our notice underwent a very severe scrutiny indeed. One or two of the ships would have done, but then the skippers were not up to my brother Edmund's standard ; and in cases where he passed the captain I got fanciful about the ship. We rejected them all save one we had yet to see, and I was constrained to say, after an afternoon spent among the shipping—

“ My dear Ned, at this rate we shall not get to England at all. We really must try to be less particular with the *Typhoon*. When I come to think of the awfully queer craft we have sailed in, I think we are carrying criticism a little too far.”

“ Not a bit, Thomas—not a bit ; ” and he wagged his great yellow beard. “ I mean to be more particular with her than any other. I have no idea of gaining experience and not using it. To the *Typhoon*, ” he said, as he tumbled into a boat ; “ where is she ? ”

“ Off the battery ; ” and away we scudded down the harbour, past the lighthouse, and past the berths of the men-of-war, just in time to see a stream of fire shoot suddenly from the side of H.M.S.

Styx, and hear the dull heavy boom of the sunset gun go rattling away among the quarries.

I sat looking at the infinitely peaceful sunlight dying out upon the lonely, happy hills, whose summits I could see above the dark quarries; and at the black quarries close on the shore in the foreground, which were beginning to send forth in strings, lines, groups, or solitary figures, swarm after swarm of grey convicts, dim, unearthly-looking under the growing gloom, crowding down to their boats like souls to Charon's bark. It struck me that it was like looking across hell to heaven, and the sight held me so long that I was only aroused by Edmund's saying, "Here she is," and my turning round and after a minute's contemplation saying, "By Jove!"

We were under the bows of a large ship, which lay the last of all seaward, beyond the battery, quite alone. The sun had set upon the water, but her vast tall masts penetrated into the lighter air above, till her truck almost seemed to pierce the fading sunlight, and showed us that her spars were very nearly as large and as heavy as those of that tremendous engine of war, the *Styx* frigate, which was her nearest neighbour. Her bows were like those of a yacht, and ran up, not into a figure-head, but into a delicate golden scroll. Such bows I have seldom seen on any ship, and I noticed them closely. The rest of the long black hull was equally satisfactory, and we were both aware that we were looking on one of the noblest clipper ships we had ever set eyes on.

"Now for the captain," I thought. "I wonder if he will do?"

Though the vast mass of the ship lay perfectly dead and motionless on the water, our little boat was leaping in so lively a manner that it required a jump to get on the ladder; but we were soon on deck and looked around us. It was one of the finest decks we had ever been on, flush, save one house aft, which took the place of a poop, but which had a broad gangway round, and a large elliptical monkey-poop astern. So that, do you see, reader, you could walk from the forecastle, past it, to the wheel, and so round it back again; might walk, in short, when at sea, twenty miles without turning. This struck us as being very charming, and we had every opportunity of seeing it at its best, for not a soul was in sight but one lanky, good-natured looking midshipman, to whom we addressed ourselves.

"Can you tell us where the first officer is, sir, if you please?" I asked.

"He is ashore, drunk. At least he was half an hour ago."

"Can you tell us where the steward is, sir, if you please?"

"Well, I am afraid it won't be much good to tell you, for I am afraid Yorky is drunk too."

This was very nice indeed. "Are the crew on board?" I asked.

"No. They are in the hulk, doing their six weeks for running. The police barge will bring them on board the night before we sail."

I looked at Edmund, and saw that, like an inconsistent fellow as he was, he had fallen so deeply in love with the ship's bows, that nothing would turn him, if the captain looked anything like business. I thought he was going to look for the captain, but he did not. He said—

"Can you kindly inform me, sir, if the *stewardess* is drunk?"

"No," said the midshipman, indignantly. "She is not. Polly drunk, indeed! She'd sue the man who dared say it. Perhaps you would like to ask if the skipper is drunk? Here he comes to answer for himself." So our midshipman hitched himself off the capstan and went away growling at Edmund's offensive inquiry about the *stewardess*.

We turned and saw before us one of the finest, most sailorlike, most gentleman-like, young fellows we had ever met in our wanderings. Scarcely thirty, we guessed, with a clear brown face, a bright eye, and as pleasant a smile, showing as fine a range of teeth as you would wish to see. An upstanding fellow too—a man every inch of him, whose crisp curly hair seemed expressly made to keep on his head, without derangement in any cyclone or typhoon which ever blew. He would do, we said at once, in spite of a drunken first officer and steward, and a crew from the hulk. When he came to us and said pleasantly, "Are you going to sail with me, gentlemen?" we answered, like a pair of Siamese twins, "Certainly."

"You are a sailor, sir?" he said to my brother, which was so far not complimentary to me.

"Why, no," said Edmund; "but I know a sailor when I see one. I am not long married, and am going to entrust a delicate wife and a baby to your keeping for 14,000 miles. Can you conscientiously undertake the job?"

"Yes," said the skipper, "I think I can. I am not fortunate in my ship's company. I have come round from San Francisco, and have picked the main of them up there; a queer lot, with all the turbulence of American sailors, and not one of their good qualities. They ran, and are in the hulk; they are as good as any I shall pick up just now. I have four good officers, a carpenter, steward, *stewardess*, and one midshipman; and I have a noble lot of passengers, thank God. I'll pull you through."

"The steward is drunk, is he not?" said I.

"Well, yes," said the skipper, laughing, "but only on principle. It ain't habitual. We have been three weeks in the bay in ballast, trying to get cargo, and have got a little wool and gold; but he has not been ashore more than three hours. Last night he told his wife and me that it was unsailorlike and unlucky to go to sea without a burst, and so he has gone on shore to get drunk. He is an excellent fellow, I assure you, and so is the carpenter."

We went into the saloon, and the stewardess, a hard-headed, hard-handed Scotch woman, showed us the vacant berths. There were now, she told us, near 100 passengers, but most of them in the second cabin, between decks. The voyage would pay, she said, entirely through the passengers. It would pay well, and she was glad of that, for the skipper had brought the ship round from San Francisco on speculation, on his own responsibility, and she wished him to stand well with the owners, as he, the skipper, was going home to be married. She seemed a dear old body, and made us more than ever in love with the ship. When she understood that she was to be plagued to death all the voyage by a delicate young wife and a baby, her satisfaction knew no bounds. She immediately asked my brother's Christian name, and has never called him by any other since. Me she tolerated, and I thanked her.

But as we looked round at the cabins (opening out of the saloon, and on deck, please to understand) a hitch occurred. We came to a cabin door on which there was a card, and on it was written in a large hand, "Mrs. Dishmore." And Edmund said, in the most peremptory manner—

"I am not going to sail in the same ship with that woman. She is intolerable enough on shore, but to sea with that woman I don't go."

"Nonsense, Ned," I said; "you need not speak to her."

"She was the woman, as you know, that tried her hardest to prevent Maria from marrying me, and I hate the sight of her."

"She probably only repeated what she had heard," I said. "You don't know anything against the woman except what we all know, that she is the most tiresome, backbiting, meddling, meddlesome Matty in the three republics. Don't be a fool."

"I'll not sail with that woman," he repeated, as we went over the side. But he did nevertheless.

That evening, after having tea with his wife, we went away on a little expedition. Certain custom-house officers had become endeared to us in the way of business, and we went to wish them good-bye. The custom-house men used, in those pre-railway times,

an inn on the shores of the bay, before you come to the light-house. We knew that we should catch some of them there that night, more particularly one; so we took the last steamboat from the pier, and went across, telling his wife that we should sleep there, and that she must get ready to go on board in three days.

I suppose that that quaint little inn is levelled to the ground now, or turned into a limited hotel. In those times it was a queer little characteristic place. It was close, closer than any other inn, to the place where the shipping lies, and as at that time thirteen millions was annually passing outwards and eleven millions inwards, it was a busy little inn, indeed. One room was almost entirely used by the skippers of ships and custom-house officers, and to this room we repaired. It was as full as usual, but there was some cause for silence; something had occurred to stop the conversation, and when we had called for what we wanted, and had sat down, we looked round for the cause.

It was evidently a tall man who was standing with his back to the fire. We had noticed that he had scowled insolently at us as we came in, but we were too eager to look round and see who of our acquaintances were there, to take much notice of him; but when we were settled, my brother Edmund looked at him again, and to my great surprise his look became fixed; he seemed to be partly interested and partly surprised at the man's appearance. I, who am short-sighted, could not see the man's face, and thought my brother had recognised him, so I very naturally asked him in a whisper if he knew the man.

"No," he said, "and don't want to. But did you ever in your experience see such an evil, truculent face before? Coward and bully in every line of it. He has been bullying these good folks. I must have a word with him. Halloo, you sir!"

The man was aware in a moment that my brother was addressing him. My brother had what may be called a forcible delivery. When he addressed any one, they were instantly aware of the fact. This man was. He turned to my brother with a scowl, and said nothing. Edmund continued—

"And how do you get along, sir?"

And in merely saying those words, and in merely wagging his great beard, Edmund said, plain for all the folks to hear, "You are a bully, my good gentleman, and I know it. Would you be so exceedingly kind as to try to bully *me*?" The spell was broken, and the conversation of the different groups was resumed all round the room. The bully growled something inaudible, and in a very few minutes sat down.

A greater contrast to this fellow could scarcely be conceived,

than such as appeared in the person of our friend who now appeared. A handsome young Highlander, in a pretty neat blue uniform, young enough to be nearly beardless, and with the titles of "gentleman" and "good fellow" written in every dimple of his handsome face, and every twinkle of his laughing hazel eyes. His eyes grew brighter when he saw us, and he came towards us somewhat eagerly.

"I have heard that you two renegades were come here to look me up, and were going to secede from the sucking republic, and were going back to the hag-ridden old step-mother Britain. Kiss the sacred ground when you land for me; and tell the dear old mother that I will come back some day, if it is only to lay my bones in her dear old bosom. Ah, happy men! and oh, most unhappy me! If I had not unluckily been born a gentleman, I might at this moment have been a gillie of Lord Breadalbane, to be a keeper in time; and might have even now been bathing my bare legs in the silver mists of divine Schiehallion. But luck is against me. I am no Lowland man that I can trade; so I must even sit here with my four hundred a year, biding my time. 'This way lies madness,' as our great Cockney poet says. My dear old boys, what ship are you going by?"

"The *Typhoon*."

"Ah! you don't happen to remember the name of the ship in which Jonah took passage from Joppa to Tarshish, do you?"

"Do you?" I said. "Why do you ask?"

"It was not the *Typhoon*, for instance, was it?" our friend answered. "No, by the by, it wasn't. In fact, now I come to remember, neither the name, the register, nor even the name of the master of that ship, are recorded in holy writ. Ah, well! So you are going by the *Typhoon*?"

My brother answered decidedly, "Yes. We have sailed in queerer craft than she is. Is there anything against her?"

"The finest ship which ever came into the bay," our friend answered. "But she has a queer crew."

"We know all about that," said Edmund. "We have sailed with Lascars before now. How about the captain?"

"A gentleman and a sailor, every inch of him. God send him always as good a ship, and always a better crew."

"Well," said Edmund, "we will chance the crew; how about the officers?"

"Let me introduce you to the first mate," said our friend, and forthwith took us across the room, and presented us to the man we had noticed on entering. Now I got near to him, I was

obliged to confess to myself that he was one of the most ill-looking dogs I had ever seen. We shall see more of him directly.

As for the rest, we could only gather that the ship was a splendid ship, and that the captain was a jewel. That contented us on the whole. On the third day from that, we were on board, waiting for the mail bag. I was standing on the house on deck by the captain, watching for the last time the swarms of grey convicts in the black quarries, and the pleasant, sunny, peaceful hills which lay beyond, thinking that, after all, it was a *very* dear old country, and getting pathetic about leaving it, when I heard a quiet voice behind us say—

“Are you going to take steam, sir?”

The captain turned immediately. “I think this suck from the north will do, sir, if it holds.”

I turned when the skipper turned, and saw for the first time our Brown Passenger.

He was very brown indeed. A scrupulously dressed, middle-sized man, with a very brown face, and iron-grey close-cropped hair. No appearance of beard or whiskers. Say an *old* man, if you like; yet so singularly handsome, with such intelligence, vitality, and determination in his face, that one felt glad that he was not a suitor for the hand of any young lady whom one proposed to make one's own. I liked the looks of him exceedingly. But unfortunately, he, at first, could not admire the looks, even the presence, of either my brother or myself. I found out afterwards the reason of this. It was our beards. He told Mrs. Dishmore, during an interval of squabbling, that he despised any man who was too lazy to shave himself, and of course Mrs. Dishmore, who sparred with us (or to speak more properly me) worse than she did with him, told us. I was never anything but very civil to the man, even before this, and always tried to make peace between him and my brother, who never submitted to him for one instant. But through it all I think he liked Edmund better than he did me.

On this occasion, when the captain had walked forward, I was gushingly polite to him. I said, to open the conversation, “This wind will take us through the Heads in ten hours, sir. Our crew are a rough lot, but they seem smart.”

“I don't profess to know much of this sort of business, sir,” he growled; “but if I may be allowed an opinion, I should say that a more turbulent, drunken set of vagabonds never had charge of a ship before.” And then he walked aft, as if I was utterly below contempt.

I said to myself, “You are a cool hand, and somewhat imperti-

nent. You have been living in Queer Street, and have got a history. I should like to know it. But you must not be impertinent to me, young gentleman. I have lived in Queer Street, too, though I don't know *your* number. Folks who have once lived in Queer Street are never impertinent to me. You must be won over. You are worth it."

But meanwhile our rascally crew, Lascars, whitewashed Americans, and "sundry," had got the anchor up and some sails spread, and we began to travel down the harbour before the north wind. Our skipper knew the harbour well enough to drop his pilot and take her out through the Heads on his own responsibility. All down the long harbour the ship was as steady as a rock, but when we had passed those Heads, and came on the great swell of the Indian Ocean, the yards were braced up, the great ship seemed to give a sigh, and bent over to her sixteen thousand miles' battle with the elements. My last recollection of the beautiful melancholy country which we shall never see again is this: as our ship made her first sickening plunge in the ocean, and showed us that she was not a mere inert mass of iron, but a glorious, almost living, creation of the human brain, I, standing on the quarter-deck, and feeling as if the bottom of my stomach was coming out at each mad dive (I am never sea-sick, this is quite another thing), noticed that we were passing H.M.S. *Styx*, which was thundering on in the teeth of the wind, at one moment showing us, in beautiful contrast, her gleaming bright deck, at another her long black hull, in which the volcano slept. Sixty-four pounders are but pop-guns in these days, of course, but nevertheless she looked about as ill-tempered and dangerous a bit of goods as ever floated on the high seas.

Meanwhile we had got the westerly wind, and with it the great westerly swell. The ship began to roll heavily as she flew before it, burying her lee bulwarks continually. For a few days I stayed much on deck enjoying the wild scene, but it soon got too cold. The ship's head was southward, and the days grew shorter, and the whirling snowstorms more frequent as she went howling down towards the weltering seas of the Antarctic Ocean.

So now I had leisure to examine our fellow-passengers more closely. The first one I naturally studied was the one who gives a title to this little story—the man known to us on the first half of the voyage as "the Brown Passenger."

I liked him, but he was very queer and reserved; and he for the first few days did not seem to like me. His great objection, as he told me after, was my beard; but even after he passed that over, and we became more familiar, I could not find out who he

was, what was his rank in life, where he had been, or what his opinions were. He was the closest man I ever met. He agreed with me in a qualified manner, till, like the late Mrs. Shandy, he nearly drove one mad. He was so exasperatingly negative and reticent, and what made the matter more exasperating was, that there was force and decision on every line of his brown face. He was a man of action, and a man of strong convictions, yet I never could strike a spark out of him. I used to try. I felt sure that the man had corns somewhere on his feet, and I used to stamp about vaguely to try and punch one of them. I never got any acknowledgment of feeling out of him, however, but a slow, amused smile. I saw that he liked me the better for my efforts to irritate him into some expression of opinion, but the only visible result was that same quiet, bright smile—and that only appeared when I had contradicted myself in trying to irritate him, and he had in a few clear words showed that I was contradicting myself. I gave him up after a week, for I made the not very flattering discovery that he was amusing himself with me. He was Somebody, I said to myself; a man who had been knocked about the world a good deal, had heard many opinions expressed, and would not commit himself. The captain, on inquiry, told me that he had been knocked about the world considerably, and that his name was Hatterton; that was all I ever got out of the skipper.

I said that his qualities were entirely negative. Why, no; for one thing, he smoked more Bengal cheroots than I ever remember another man doing; and for another, his extreme dislike and opposition to Mrs. Dishmore was by no means negative, but positive. This naturally leads us to Mrs. Dishmore.

Mrs. Dishmore was originally a Miss Polk. She first burst on the gaze of a somewhat startled world as a most advanced lecturer upon the rights of women. That she ever was a Bloomer is entirely untrue; but she went further in her notions even in dress than her friends chose to follow her. Age, however, brought experience. She receded from her extremer views, and contented herself with contradicting and setting right every one with whom she came in contact, without any regard to age, sex, or degree of experience. Hearing that an excellent Roman Catholic lady was doing some excellent work among homeless girls in the city we had just left, she thought—knowing nothing about the matter, and having nothing to do—that she could go out and show Mrs. — the proper way of doing her work. Now began our acquaintance with her, and my brother's intense dislike to her. She came in the same ship with my sister-in-law, who was coming out to be married to my brother; and poor Maria poured her

pretty little secret into the unsympathising and flinty bosom of the Miss Polk, who devoted the whole voyage to trying to persuade my sister-in-law to break off the match, and to join her in the joys and independence of a single life, bonded together against the tyranny of man. What with Edmund's wife insisting on marrying Edmund, and what with Mrs. ——— affirming that she knew her own business best, and refusing to be assisted on any terms, Miss Polk grew disgusted with things in general, some of her own opinions included, and in a mood of lofty and self-denying scorn, proposed to Dishmore, a meek but wealthy little ironmonger, who was flattered by her notice of him, and accepted her proposal with great pleasure.

Poor Mrs. Dishmore was, I must allow, a terribly contradictory and bumptious woman, always setting her hands to do man's work instead of woman's; but there was something more than that merely, which made our Brown Passenger, Hatterton, take such an intense dislike to her. The fact was, that she offended him, and jarred upon his senses by every word and gesture; he hated her way of going on, and she, of a far coarser texture of nerve, was utterly unable to see that she repelled him. She took a great fancy to him, and followed him everywhere, until he was driven to the fore-castle, and sometimes even to the masthead.

I never shall forget his face the first day at noon, when Mrs. Dishmore took out her sextant and took her observation at noon. She had a chart of her own, and always marked the ship's place on it, never making her reckoning the same as the skipper's, and always maintaining she was right. However, as I once marked the place from her reckoning, and made the discovery that the ship was in the centre of the Brazils, forty miles north of the city of Goyaz, I was less anxious about the captain's incompetency than I should have been.

The first and almost the only piece of confidence I ever got from Mr. Hatterton was late one wild night, when I met him coming into the saloon, with an expression of face, which was partly astonishment, and partly exasperation. He had never spoken familiarly to me before, but he must speak to some one, and he spoke to me. "Sir," he said, "I am blessed if that woman ain't on deck in the steward's mackintosh, taking a lunar."

The captain turned out to be a most charming and gallant sailor, and the first officer did not belie his character either. He was a headlong, ill-conditioned ruffian. He never forgave my brother's hoity-toity treatment of him in the coffee-room of the tavern, but he was afraid of my brother, and tried whether or no

he could avenge himself on me by a variety of petty insults. I had to stop it.

The crew were a great study. I wish there was room in this story for a full description of them. Such few of them as had not been picked up at San Francisco, had been got, drunk, out of the crimp-houses in the port from which we had sailed. I should say there were twenty-five of them; one or two Lascars, one or two Portuguese, one American (U.S.), and one Baltic German. All the rest called themselves citizens of the United States, and were of the class commonly called whitewashed Yankees, and who seem to be as cordially detested by the real American sailors, as they are by British captains. I have carefully separated the one real American sailor, as fine a fellow as ever stepped ["run"] from a Pacific whaler, from them, as you see. We disliked the slangy, turbulent, quarrelsome rowdies enough, but his unutterable contempt for them was too deep for words. He was a great, blonde, handsome giant, with a beard: hailing from Nantucket, as he said. He used to put all the rest of the crew out of his way like dirt, and I expected to see a knife in his ribs every day; but he ruled them like a lord, nevertheless, and they looked up to him as a demi-god. He was one of the great new race, and their dog-instinct told them so. They were always brutally fighting among one another, but no one, though some of them were as big as he, ever dared to offer to fight him. He was familiar with no one except my brother, and our Brown Passenger, Hatterton, who seemed to appreciate him. He, although with a deep belief in the glory of the United States, wanted to see England. And it is strange, but perfectly true, that the place of all others he wanted to see in England was—what?—Stratford-on-Avon! He didn't know his Shakspeare to any degree worth mentioning, but he was very angry with me because I laughed at him about this whim of his. But a whim it was, and he gratified it.

Hatterton, my brother, the good-natured and solitary midshipman, the American sailor, and myself, were one night smoking together in the waist, in the interval of a snowstorm, when he said this:—

"I suppose, squire," addressing himself to Mr. Hatterton, "ever since Noah's ark sailed from the port of Babylon, crew eight souls, all told, and an amount of live stock, which could only be excused under the circumstances, that a queerer lot never put to sea than this present ship's company."

"We *are* a devilish queer lot," answered Hatterton. "I have seen some queer things myself, and some queer crews, but never anything like this. What the deuce prevents the crew, headed by

the mate, from walking aft some fine night, cutting our throats, and taking the ship northward and running her on shore on the coast of Peru to spend the eight thousand ounces of gold on board, is past my comprehension."

"The passengers, squire!—the passengers!"

"The passengers!" said our Brown Passenger, with the deepest contempt; "the passengers!"

"Ay, squire; there's passengers, and there's passengers. As for *emigrants*, you might slaughter a shipful of 'em like sheep; but such fellows as this one, and this one (he pointed to my brother and to me), have had their lives in their hands before now. They would fight; and there are fifty more men aboard like them, or better. They know it. They'll never come aft. If they do, God help 'em."

They never did, and they never will. The passengers distrusted the crew, and the crew knew it, and insulted the passengers. There was no communication, and no collision between us, until the very last. There were six people berthed aft who dared go forward, and these were—the first mate (the worst ruffian of the lot), the carpenter, the steward and his wife, and, strange to say, Hatterton, the Brown Passenger, who went forward and sent them right and left like unruly dogs; and, stranger still, Eliza Dishmore. She, as they would say in their barbarous slang, "slew" them. They could not make her out at all. Whether she was a woman, or a man in disguise; whether she was sailing the ship, or whether the captain was (*she* had a deal more to say about it than ever *he* had), they could not make out; but she cleared them out of her way in a royal matter-of-fact style, which had the proper effect. She was on the forecastle once, in half a gale, when the ship was going about three-quarters free (I must mind being too nautical), when the man at the wheel drove the ship's nose into it; that is to say, shortly, laid the ship under water. Eliza Dishmore, having rescued herself from the lee scuppers, walked aft, and gave it to that man. What she said to him, how she contrived to hurt his feelings to the extent she did, we shall never know. But he and the rest of our very piratical crew fought very shy of her afterwards. I am glad I was not the man at the wheel, however.

You have gone with me so far. It seems to me that I have nothing more to tell you about the ship, and the different relations of those who were sailing in her. Now comes an incident which altered the most of those relations, and which makes this little story worth telling.

When you get lower down than 53° south, a great westerly

wind, always strong, and sometimes, nay, more than sometimes, breezing up into a gale, blows round the world: the wind against which Lord Anson fought, and in his noble ignorance did almost the noblest deed of British seamanship. We were going before that wind now, but southing on it, to make, as near as is possible, the great circle of the Rebel Maury. Sometimes this wind has a few degrees north in it, sometimes a few degrees south. One evening it was so nearly north-west, that the ship, still heading southward, was laid over, with the water tearing in cascades over her lee bulwarks.

That day we had had champagne. Three days before it had blown up into a gale, and the skipper had put the ship before it, and we had run a thousand miles in ninety-six hours—a most splendid run for any ship in such a heavy sea; that was the reason of the champagne.

That same evening the skipper, the Brown Passenger, and myself were smoking on the quarter-deck. The gale had moderated, but the sea was getting heavier and heavier. The wind, as I said, was north-west, and very warm (please to remember that we were in the southern hemisphere, and that the wind was from the equator), but as the evening dropped, it grew colder and colder, until it got deadly chill. Then, as darkness settled down on the face of the wild heaving waters, a snowstorm came drifting on the wind, and made the ship look, to us on the quarter-deck, like the ghost of a ship driving through a sea of pitch.

Our good skipper had been talking to our Brown Passenger, Hatterton, and they both seemed dissatisfied with something. I heard the skipper say, "I must turn in. I cannot stand five-and-twenty hours of it. Keep on deck as long as you can. Here he is." And then the first officer came up to relieve him.

"Mr. Hicks," were his last words, "if it comes on any thicker, lay the ship to immediately. Be sure of this. I *must* turn in."

Hatterton and I stayed on deck a little while, and the weather seemed mending; the intervals between the snowstorms were longer, and we thought the night would lift, so we went and turned in too, and I tried to sleep.

But I could not. Three thousand miles from land, in those awful, desolate latitudes, a ghastly danger all around, unseen, and yet near enough to lay its hand upon one's heart, and freeze one's blood, and the ship dashing along under the charge of a reckless drunken villain. Sleep—not I! I once more got out of my warm bed (it was freezing cold, now, and I shook with fear

as well), and went on deck. My worst fears were realised ; we were in the midst of a blinding snowstorm, and the ship was flying through it at her best pace. To remonstrate with the drunken madman, Hicks, was to be told to mind my own business. I turned to arouse the captain.

Oh, that ghastly yell !—that hideous cry of despair and terror which went to my heart like a dagger, and told me the end had come. It was the horrified shriek of the watch forward. It was inarticulate, but if the words for which that cry was intended had been spoken never so slowly or so loudly, they could not have told the disaster more plainly. We were lost.

Almost at the bowsprit end the snow seemed to thicken and to solidify, forming a white wall across her course. I doubt if there was time to put the helm down. I had time to see one hideous white ice crystal, just to the right of the fore-royal yard, and then I crouched against the bulwarks, expecting the shock. For we had run at full speed on an iceberg.

It came in an instant. The ship stopped so suddenly that I was thrown along the deck, bruised and hurt ; and then one heard the crash. There was a ripping, tearing, and cracking of wood all around, and last of all the sound of heavy bodies falling through the air as the masts came headlong down, one on deck and two partly overboard. Then ruin and confusion unutterable, indescribable.

I suppose my courage is about the same as that of commonplace people, but it would be worse than absurd to conceal the fact that I was dazed and stunned by the hideous disaster, and did not, for a certain, very short time, know what to do. This may partly have arisen from the fact that I instinctively knew, or thought I knew, that nothing could be done—that death was a matter of minutes. But this was not the case with the crew. Their sailor instincts taught them better. The first thing I became aware of, the first thing with any kind of arrangement in it which happened after the ruin was this : the crew was crowding into the two larboard boats, which still hung in the davits (the starboard boats had been crushed to atoms by the fall of the foremast), and were leaving the ship.

The first boat, lowered with Clifford's apparatus, was in the water in a moment, and in another was stove, and sunk among the floating wreck. Not a soul in her came on board again. The other hung in the davits longer ; their complement was made up all but two—the carpenter, and the American sailor, who stood before me. The carpenter was not to be found, and the American stood looking at them.

A young man had forced his way up from the second cabin, and came to them. I heard what he said.

"There's room for a dozen more souls in that boat, mates. Take my wife with you; for the love of God, take her."

No answer to him but curses.

"Where is the carpenter? We must have Chips. We *want* Chips," they cried. "Jump in, Yankee. Come on, or you'll be too late."

I cannot give the American's answer. It was too rough. The words in which he expressed his unutterable contempt for them would not do to reproduce here. Yet, coarse as they were, they were so wondrous witty that even while I am dwelling on the horrors of that night, I cannot forbear to laugh while I recall them.

The first mate, who commanded this boat, gave the word to lower away, and they went down the ship's side into night and darkness, never to be heard of again. It is impossible to guess at their fate. They may have been swamped soon, or they may have been tossed on that bitter, weltering sea till they ate one another. Who can tell? May God forgive them! No one ever heard of them again.

It was a full moon, and the night was light. I saw that the ship was settling down by the head, and moreover had swung clear of the iceberg, and was going to settle herself down decently, without any more breakage. There was a great deal of noise and confusion. The second-cabin passengers had broken up from below, preferring, for some reason, the having a wild, desperate struggle for life, to being drowned *en masse*. So there were some five-and-twenty tragedies taking place around me, which I hardly noticed, for between you and I, reader, life happened to be very precious to me just at that time, and I was selfish and loth to die. But some one laid a hand on my shoulder, and I looked round and saw who it was.

Eliza Dishmore. She said, "The ship is sinking, is it not?"

I said "Yes. Have you seen my brother? I should like to see him again."

"He is with his wife and child. Better leave them alone. Even a brother would be *de trop*. Stay, and die with me."

"I will heartily consent to die with so brave a woman."

"I always liked you," she said. "You never *believed* in me, but you were always good-natured when you laughed at me. You will tell me, I know, when the time comes to say good-bye."

"It will not be long," I said. "Look at the angle of the deck now."

"It has been like that this ten minutes," she said. "There must be some hitch in the performance."

I might have thought she was taking things rather coolly, and I do now. But at this moment I was nearly knocked down by the carpenter, who appeared at full speed from forward, and who seemed to be mad. The American sailor turned round and joined us at this moment; and we either did say something, or were going to say something, to one another, when we were interrupted by a voice—a voice from the quarter-deck, which seemed to divide the dark night of death like a flame of fire, and send despair like a howling ghost to wander over the desolate ice-ridden sea, which was ready to engulf us. A voice loud, shrill, and clear, audible in every syllable, even in expression, though so loud that every one heard it plainly above the wash of the waves, and the beating of the floating wreck upon the iron sides of the ship. It was heard by every man and woman upon that deck; for at the hearing of it, the parting, wailing groups broke up, and the men came staggering aft toward the quarter-deck, pushing one another aside in their contest to get nearer to it.

The voice shrilled out this upon the night and ruin, "The ship is not sinking; the fore compartment has been stove, but the next is perfectly dry. Men! if you ever want to see England again, get to work and cut away the wreck of the masts."

Whose voice was it? I had never heard it before. I looked up at a light which was burning at the binnacle, on the fore part of the quarter-deck, and saw the face of our Brown Passenger, Hatterton, peering down into the darkness. The voice was his. The American sailor, Eliza Dishmore, and myself immediately adjourned to that same binnacle for orders; and I well remember that the American sailor bowed precedence to both of us, as we went up the ladder.

"Carpenter," he said, as we approached him, "go forward and give the young men their orders. Have the wreck of the foremast and mizenmast cut away; that will do till daylight. The mainmast must lie on deck at present; that will do for to-night. Be sharp, now, or we shall have another hole knocked in the ship's side. We are to the leeward of ice now, but we shall drift into the swell again directly, and then I wouldn't give twopence-halfpenny for us with that wreck hanging overboard."

I went towards him, and I said, "What shall I do, sir?"

"You! Let me see? Who the devil is it? Ah! I see. You are a very popular fellow, with a gift of the gab. A very good gift, mind you; I wish I had it. You; let me see: you go and animate them. Tell them I am going to take the ship to Valparaiso, and

that there is not the least fear of my not doing so. Have you seen the skipper ? ”

“ No, sir.”

“ Did he go off in one of the boats ? ”

“ Of course he did not,” I said, indignantly.

“ Of course not,” answered the Brown Passenger. “ Now, sir ? ”

This was to the American sailor : who replied that he wished to be “ told off ” to something special.

“ Go to the helm, sir, for the present. I shall want *you* when we rig a jury mast. You are a noble fellow, and the only seaman I have left ; go forward, sir.”

He went forward. There remained Eliza Dishmore, who said :

“ And what am I to do, sir ? ”

“ Go to your berth, madam, and thank God for your safety.”

“ I can do more than that. Come, use me fairly, sir, or you and I shall quarrel. Tell me off for something.”

“ Can you keep those women quiet ? Can you organise a hospital ? For when day dawns we shall find a long list of killed and wounded, I fear. There were many on deck.”

“ There were very few,” she answered. “ But I can do what you want. If I could not, who could ? ”

“ Were you on deck, madam, when this happened ? ”

“ I was.”

“ Did you see the skipper—the master, madam ? ”

“ I did not. But I saw the boats put off, and he was in neither of them. He is lying dead somewhere ; under the wreck of the mainmast. How utterly mean you must be to suspect that man ! ”

“ Mean, madam ? ”

“ Yes, mean. And why do you suspect and dislike me so, that your gentle breeding hardly keeps you civil ? You are a gentleman, but you have gone near the edge of your gentility in your treatment of me. What have I done that you should treat me as you have done ? ”

“ Madam, I humbly beg your pardon. May I beg that you would be kind enough to proceed about what you undertook ? ”

I believe that this was the only explanation ever entered into by this queer pair. But the next time I saw them together they seemed perfectly devoted to one another, and remained so for the whole voyage. He not only had got really to respect her, from seeing all her noble qualities shine out, in spite of her fantastic appearance and odd manners, but his delicate conscience told him he had been more brusque with her on some occasions than he should have been. He made the most perfect amends.

Meanwhile day crept over the busy scene, and the snowstorm

ceased, giving way to a glorious, clear, sparkling morn. Engaged as I was, I could not help looking round with the most eager curiosity to catch sight of the iceberg—that hideous grey mass on which we had struck in the dead of the wild night. It was close to us still, scarce five miles off at sunrise, and of all the beautiful objects I have ever seen I think that was the most beautiful. It lay floating upon a bright blue sea, flecked with flying purple shadows, and every crystal and pinnacle was blazing like the brightest silver against an intensely blue sky, while the shadows on the berg itself were of the palest, most delicate green. It was the only one near us, but to the south we could see a long line of them, stretching across the horizon, much like another Bernese Oberland.

We found the poor captain, struck down on deck, with both his legs broken, entirely helpless. But we had no need of his services, poor fellow, for our brown friend turned out to be the finest sailor we had ever sailed with ; a master of his profession in every branch, apparently knowing as much of details as the carpenter. A surgeon too, and no bad one, for he set the captain's legs, and the Scotch stewardess and Edmund's wife nursed him into convalescence. A man of resource, for he and the carpenter got a sail over the bows, and so far stopped the leak as to get the fore compartment pumped out, which made her sail better. A man perfectly accustomed to command, and before we had been four days on our new voyage we saw that we should have been lost after all without him.

To say that Mrs. Dishmore turned out a thorough trump may be familiar, but it is certainly true. She discovered next day that the cook was drowned, so she instantly established herself at the coppers, and worked there and among the wounded like a slave. The instant it was possible to do so, she suggested the propriety of offering up a thanksgiving. And this led me to the conclusion, judging from his splendid intonation, that our wonderful brown friend had been accustomed to read prayers in public. Another person who turned out a real hero was the solitary young midshipman whom we had first seen. His fortune is made. He has a ship of his own now.

We were two long months getting to Valparaiso, and the perfect accord there was among us all, the perfect good temper and mutual kindness which was shown by every one in the ship, made it the happiest voyage I ever made. Out of the hundred people assembled in that ship, there are no two, I am certain, who would not meet now as friends.

It was only when I was passing in a boat, with my brother and sister, under the bows of the ship at Valparaiso, that I fully

understood what had happened. Those beautiful, delicate bows were ripped and bulged into a hideous, shapeless mass, half veiled by a puckered sail, which hid from our view the still more awful gaps it shrouded. The injuries had been mainly above water, and thus had helped to save us.

The brown gentleman had left the ship in care of the captain, who was now well enough to attend to duty, that very morning. We learnt from the shore boats that her Majesty's frigate *Diana* was in the harbour, and would sail for England that day. As we passed up the harbour we saw her get under weigh: the six hundred men were still swarming on her rigging as she passed us: on the quarter-deck we saw Hatterton.

Yes, he indeed, for he saw us, and cried out to us, "God bless you! God bless you! Good-bye!" and we answered in a similar manner, and then all sat silent, having found out, now we had lost him, how well we had got to love him.

We found at the hotel on shore a packet directed to my brother in his handwriting. It was an address to the passengers, and ran as follows:—

"Rear-Admiral Sir Charles Hatterton presents his compliments to the passengers of the ship *Typhoon*, and congratulates them on the successful termination of a very perilous voyage.

"During his long experience in Arctic discovery, he has never seen more courage, more patience, and more good humour displayed than he has lately witnessed among the passengers of the *Typhoon*, the whole of whom, with four exceptions, were landmen.

"With the heartiest good wishes to every one of them, he bids them heartily farewell."

SEEKING YOUR FORTUNE

SEEKING YOUR FORTUNE.

THE Scotch habitually seek their fortunes, and nearly always, most deservedly, find them. Englishmen generally wait for their fortunes to be brought to them, and somehow or another their expectations are generally fulfilled, which is very lucky for the Englishman, because he is by far the worst fortune-hunter of the three united nations. The Scotchman hunts his fortune in a cool, masterful way, which *commands* success. The world takes a man generally (so they say) at his own valuation. The Scotchman's valuation of himself is very high, and, moreover, it is a correct valuation. Englishmen who have to get things done in strange countries, sleep sound when they have got a cool Scotchman as their subordinate or coadjutor. You are perfectly certain of him. He knows his own immense value, and makes you and the world also know it. The Irishman hunts fortune in a very different way. He is not cosmopolitan, like the Scotchman. He can, like him, be all things to all men, but in a very different way. The Scotchman has the genius to be actually *one* of the community in which he is thrown. The Irishman has not. He only learns in a superficial manner the *talk* of the community, and offends that community continually by showing it that it is all skin deep, and that he is an Irishman still. The Scotchman will actually become and *be*, in England, a most admirable factor, manager, or game-keeper; in China, a most excellent blue-buttoned mandarin. Scotchmen, where Scotchmen are few, are a little apt to be jealous of one another, not liking a divided empire. Irishmen herd together like sheep, and form a community utterly apart from all the other nations of the world, and win their way to salaried places by sheer dint of "log rolling," and holding by his own countrymen. In new countries an Irishman seldom goes long without a situation. It is very rare to find a Scotchman in the receipt of a salary for long. He soon exchanges a salary for a share in the business.

Your Irishman will be contented with wages to the day of his death. Of course there are exceptions. There are many Irishmen who are as shrewd, as keen, and as independent as any Scotchman ; yet the rule is, I think, as I have stated it.

The young men of these two nations succeed, in their different ways, in the battle of life : the Scotch in England, in Europe, and in the colonies ; the Irish, in the United States, and the Southern colonies. Now of the English.

The average well-educated young Englishmen possesses the good qualities of both the sister nations in the highest degree. He is as well made, as well educated, as well trained morally (perhaps better). As for physical training, he is ridiculously overdone in that matter. He is truthful, kindly, brave, and only too generous ; yet when this fellow-countryman of mine is put on his own legs, without interest or help, to find his own fortunes, he turns out to be the most ridiculously helpless animal on the face of the globe. Put the work ready to his hand, and he will do it, as few besides Frenchmen and Prussians can do it. Set him to *find* the work, and he will miss it. An Englishman must have the work brought to him in a spoon, and put to his mouth. Then—

Enough of generalising. Let me tell my story. Draw nearer the fire, for I mean to make you feel cold before we part.

In times, very old now, in the times when our fathers were very young, there was a certain Captain Blackeston, of the 112th regiment of the British line, who was very highly distinguished in the service.

He was a very well-known man indeed, deeply respected and liked by his wild comrades of those times, though they pretended to laugh at him as a bookworm and a Methodist. The more intelligent generals of those times were beginning to get used to his name. The Duke of Wellington, in alluding to some pamphlets of his, had said that to all appearance he had more knowledge of military history than any man of his day. He was a man marked for promotion.

His regiment was ordered to America in 1815, but General Oakfield begged him, as a personal favour, to accept the appointment of aide-de-camp. Oakfield was one of the few men who saw that there would certainly be another struggle, and that Napoleon must be sent further than Elba before Europe would be quiet. He put such reasons before Blackeston as made him stay, to the wonder of his regiment. He got leave to accept the appointment, and took the opportunity of the pause to marry a beautiful young wife.

Oakfield was a splendid soldier and a brave man, but he was

very rude and wild in his life. I must only say that Oakfield, considering Blackeston to be under obligations to him, almost patronised Mrs. Blackeston. It is to be said in excuse for Oakfield that he took quite as much to drink as was allowable in those liberal old times, and that when the scandal took place he was half drunk.

He, so the story goes, came to Mrs. Blackeston's apartments in the Rue St. Hubert later than he should have done, having ascertained, so said Blackeston's defence on the court-martial, that Captain Blackeston was out. He offered some verbal rudeness to her, which made her raise her voice and scold him. Blackeston came in from the next room, and seized General Oakfield by the throat. In the scandalous struggle which followed, the general fell downstairs.

Not one word was said on either side. Had it not been that General Oakfield did not appear at the Duchess of Richmond's ball, and that he took his regiment into action at Quatre Bras with a black eye, nothing would ever have been said. But people will cackle and gossip as long as the world lasts.

I believe that the thing might have been finished between these two men, had it not been for the cackling of their comrades. The porter of the house had told the truth to every one he met. So General Oakfield's friends taunted him with having been beaten, and Blackeston's friends sneered at him for not having called the general out. Blackeston, a studious and sensitive man, felt the taunts of his friends as only a student can.

Yet this quarrel between the two men would have died into stillness if it had been left alone. Blackeston thought that Oakfield was drunk, and did not know what he was about; and Oakfield confessed to himself that he was half drunk, had made a fool of himself, and had been properly served. The two men went into action together at Waterloo; and in that ghastly pushing crush up the hill at half-past six, with the world at stake, when Oakfield's horse, killed by a cannon shot, came headlong down dead, and cast Oakfield prone on the ground among the legs of his men, Blackeston "set him on his own beast," and said, "Heavens! general, I feared you were hit yourself."

But they would not leave them alone to settle their quarrel. Blackeston's friends sneered him into madness—sneered him into the miserable folly of sending a challenge to General Oakfield.

Oakfield very properly did not wish to fight. Since his half-tipsy escapade he had been very near the gates of death, and had seen very serious things: Quatre Bras and Mont St. Jean, for instance. I think that the man behaved well. He consulted

his friend General Lennox. He confessed himself in the wrong entirely; pointed out that, after his conduct at Waterloo, his courage was beyond suspicion; and asked his brother general whether he might not be allowed to apologise and refuse to fight. His brother general agreed with him, but unfortunately allowed the matter to reach the ears of the Duke.

The Duke's heart was hot and furious within him. They were advancing on the country of the French, one of the most irritable, valiant, and sensitive people in the world. The Prussians were showing already signs of Vandalism. His own personal prestige was sufficiently great to keep all things in order, and to prevent a quarrel with the French which time could never heal—a quarrel which would make the name of Englishmen loathed in France for ever. The first necessary thing was to keep his own raw troops, few of whom had ever seen war, in order. The prestige which he had acquired by beating the starved French out of Spain, with command of the sea, and the lines of Torres Vedras for a basis of operations, would avail him to keep Blucher in order, who had nothing to show per contra but Jena and Ligny. But he must keep his own army in order. If he allowed one officer to fight one duel, where would he be? After an enmity of twenty-five years, there were twenty thousand high-spirited officers in France, who would shoot an Englishman as they would shoot a dog. This habit of duelling must be checked in one way or another. An example must be made: and the example was Blackeston. He was brought to court-martial for challenging his superior officer—was cashiered, disgraced, and ruined.

Blackeston was a rare man in the British army in those days, but the type of man is getting commoner now, as the Staff College can witness. He was a student soldier—a man of the Havelock type, of whom let our enemies beware. But he was a man of extreme sensibility; he thought himself disgraced, and went away to hide himself from the ken of man. He hid his head in Wales, at a place called Plas Gwynant, under Snowdon, as you go from Capel Curig to Bethgelert, fronting the lake which is called Llyn y Dinas. Here his poor bride, worried nearly to death by the details of the court-martial, and killed by the verdict of it, gave birth to a son, and died.

I cannot in this space go in a business-like manner into Blackeston's difficulties. They grew greater, and at last irremediable. But he declined to be ruined, to beg, and to whine. He was never in debt. The time came when even the rent of Plas Gwynant was beyond his means. He passed out of that house a free man, with some fifty pounds a year, and went into a cottage, in that narrow

gorge under Snowdon, which they call, I think, or ought to call, Glyn y Ilan. But he took with him his boy and his books.

His books. He refused to part with them. I am at this moment puzzled to say whether or not the books make the boy.

It would be wearisome were it even possible to give an account of these books. They comprised the best scientific and mathematical books, and a sufficiency of history; but the *spécialité* of the library was that it contained probably the finest collection of military books in any one private hand in England. Blackeston, ageing rapidly, hearing only dim rumours of the world, was left alone with his books, his boy, and his God, under the solemn shadows of the soaring Wydffa.

To shape the human soul which was in his keeping as near to perfection as he might, was now his care, his pleasure, and his labour. As for the boy's prosperity in life, for his profession, for his friends, Blackeston was profoundly indifferent. "I will make the boy fit," he said, "and God will find the work." His mind was getting unhealthy in his disappointment, and this fatalism went near to ruining the youth, in spite of all his excellences.

There was scarcely enough to eat in this little cottage of theirs, and yet he gave the lad the education of a German prince. As the son grew up, the father was astonished at his own handy-work. Lionel Blackeston at eighteen was not only a well-grown and finely-framed youth, but also was a highly-informed man, a splendid theoretical soldier, and a perfect gentleman; a gentleman, however, who had scarcely twice in his life interchanged words with one of his own order.

In those days there were a considerable number of grouse on the hills to the south of Llyn y Dinas. Shooting was one of the accomplishments which Captain Blackeston had given to Lionel; and the moor being free, he used to ramble many miles, the contributions which his gun brought to their limited larder being extremely welcome. His father, now rapidly ageing, ceased to accompany him in these rambles.

One August day, when getting good sport among that innumerable maze of tiny lakes which lie under and around the pretty, needle-like peak, Cnicht, he heard the double report of a gun, and instantly afterwards three birds came over the slight knoll in front of him, of which he knocked down two, one of which fell in the little lake, or rather pond, on the shore of which he stood. The next minute another sportsman, attended by a gamekeeper and a brace of dogs, came over the hill and approached him.

He watched the new-comer. He was a splendid-looking young man, with a very refined face, dressed very beautifully, in black

velvet, with yellowish cord trousers ; a dandy, with a watch-chain and rings, the first dandy Lionel Blackeston had ever seen in his life. The young dandy also looked at Lionel—a strange contrast to himself, for he was clothed all in grey Welsh flannel, wearing breeches, common grey stockings, and very thick boots ; yet a fine figure notwithstanding, and the word “gentleman” so plainly written in his handsome face, and bold upstanding carriage, that the young dandy came straight towards him with a smile and a bow.

“One of us is, I think, trespassing, and I greatly fear that I am the culprit. My father, Lord Hawkestone, has only lately bought this property, and we are not at all sure of our marches, nor indeed of whom we march with ; and this keeper is a stranger and a Scotchman. I have been principally used to shooting in Scotland. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Lord Overbury.”

“You are certainly over your march, my lord ; but all the moor is as free as air. I should decidedly advise you to shoot among these bracken fells as often as possible. You will find that the grouse lie here thicker than on any part of your father’s estate, except Glyn Edno. Now we are on the subject, allow me to say that I have to apologise for having frequently trespassed across your marches. I was unaware that you were going to preserve, although I heard that you were going to purchase Glyn Edno.”

“I hope that you will repeat your trespass as often as you wish,” said Lord Overbury. “I see that your bird has fallen into the loch. Allow me to send my dog after him.”

This little civility paved the way for others. Lord Overbury said—

“You mentioned just now a part of our estate in which the grouse lie as thick as they do here. We are utterly unacquainted with our new estate, and are ignorant of its capacities for game. If you would kindly consent to walk with me to the part you speak of, you would confer a great favour on me ; a favour which will not be half repaid by my requesting you to shoot our moor whenever you feel inclined.”

The invitation was too tempting to be resisted, and Lionel went south with him, pointed out his march, shot over the best part of the moor with him, and ended by accepting an invitation to enter Lord Hawkestone’s house.

There was a little discussion before he accepted this invitation. The two young men had been walking for five hours together among the mountains, with no one but a sedate Scotch game-keeper for company, and felt as if they had known one another for at least five years. They were perfectly confident and per-

factly familiar with one another. Lord Overbury said, "You must come and spend the evening with us." Lionel said, "My father is at home alone." Lord Overbury said, "You have confessed to me that you often lie out on the hill-side, and so *that* goes for nothing." Lionel said, "I have never been into society." Lord Overbury said, "It is time, then, that you begun." "I have no clothes," said Lionel. "Once in a way you can wear mine," said Lord Overbury.

It was done, and he was saved.

At eight o'clock that evening Lord Hawkestone, getting petulant for his dinner, had rung up the butler for the third time, and had said—

"I shall wait for Lord Overbury no longer."

"His lordship is dressing, sir," said the butler.

"It matters nothing to me. If Overbury chooses cold soup, he must choose it."

The very next moment he came face to face with a young man, whom he took for Lord Overbury, but who was, of course, our friend Lionel. He did not see his mistake at first, but merely said, "George, you are incorrigibly unpunctual about dinner. Give me your arm. When you have done as I have done, when you have lived out politics, love, military glory, and friendship, as I have done, and have nothing left to look forward to but your dinner and your death, you will be more punctual about your dinner. Your death will keep."

Lord Hawkestone, who put his hand on Lionel's arm, not recognising him, never dreamed that he was speaking to any one but his own son until they were seated at dinner. Then Lord Overbury said to his father, "You seem to have taken to my new friend, father."

Lord Hawkestone, who was eating his fish, looked up, and his eyes got fixed on Lionel. "I thought it was you, George," he said; "why did you bring him of all men here?"

"I met him on the moors," said Lord Overbury.

"But you need not have brought him home," said Lord Hawkestone. "Take away this fish, it is stale. Is your father dead?"

Lionel said, No, that his father was alive.

"I was not to blame. I really was not in any way to blame. It was merely a parcel of quidnuncs and idiots who were to blame; and I was not so very wrong in the first instance. I was only tipsy. Take warning by the faults of your fathers, you young men, and avoid drink. What I said to her was quite harmless. Still, he was right."

Lord Overbury interposed.

"Father, you are wandering. You are really confusing matters. This young gentleman is merely an acquaintance I have picked up on the moors. I do not even know his name."

"I can tell it you, then," said Lord Hawkestone, "though I have never set eyes on him before : his name is Blackeston."

Both the young men stared with astonishment as the old man went on, "What need to ask him his name? is it not written on his face? Young gentleman, ask your father if he remembers and forgives General Oakfield, who has since become Lord Hawkestone."

Nothing very particular passed further on this occasion. Lionel went home, and reported what had passed to his father, who only said—

"Yes, yes; that is all very well. So you acted ghost at his dinner, eh? Forgive him? I forgave him at Waterloo."

Neither of the young men ever received one word of explanation from either of their fathers. Lord Hawkestone died soon after, and Lionel heard of his friend afar off, in all the splendour of his new inheritance. He was to come into his own heritage soon.

He spoke to his father about Lord Hawkestone once, and once only, after the first time, because he saw that there was some painful remembrance. "I think it fine in Lord Hawkestone," he said, "sticking to the army after having come into such a fine fortune." And his father said, "It is creditable. His father was not a bad man, and his mother came of a good stock."

It was wild early winter, and the mountain lowered overhead like a vast and dim white ghost; day was falling, night approaching, when he turned into their glen, after a long day's walk, looking forward eagerly to the firelight in his father's mean window, and anticipating one more evening of happy study and happy conversation with his beloved one over the fire. Alas! never, never more! There was no light in the house, and it was silent and empty.

Uneasiness gave way to alarm, alarm to terror, terror to despair, for the night was wild and terrible—a night in which nature was so fierce and fell, that it would take the strongest young body, and the bravest young heart, to contend with her. Certainly the enfeebled frame of his father would succumb. Unknowing where to go, he spent a maddening night among the winds and the waters, which grew madder as the night went on. When the winter's sun rose, and smote upon the peak of Snowdon, the land was loud with the roar of raging waters; and above all the sound and confusion,

arose the mountain—solitary, calm, cruel, with its secret folded in its bosom.

That secret never was read, for the mountain kept it to itself. When the snow went they searched, but much had come and gone with the snow. Whether the poor gentleman had fallen from some dizzy height, or whether he was whelmed in an avalanche, or drowned in a torrent, they never knew. The *débris* from the winter's ruin on the mountain was the only burial he ever had.

He had trusted the mountain, and loved it. It had been a familiar thing to him, and he had been warned more than once by his neighbours that he was too rash with it. This was the end.

Not only the end of him, but the end of much more. Lionel's situation was an almost inconceivable one. He had never had the handling of any money, but now he found himself utterly penniless.

I do not suppose that he had ever had more than a shilling or two at one time; but here now, in the midst of this ghastly affliction, he found himself without any shillings at all. If he had ever wanted a shilling, which was seldom—for what could he have done with it among the mountains?—his father had given it to him, warning him that there were not many. Suddenly the mountain, which they both had loved, had devoured his father, and was holding aloft its silver crystal in silent triumph over its victim—and there was no more money.

He knew absolutely nothing of his father's affairs, save that they were very poor. When the necessity was forced upon him, he hunted in places into which he had never thought of looking in the old times, for money. But he found none. He found in his father's bureau, and elsewhere, a lock of hair (only one, done up with a blue riband), a pair of spurs, a sword or two, and a French eagle; but of money none, and of jewellery none. Of manuscripts many; but merely, as Lionel saw, the cast-aside rubbish of a man who had been so long dissociated from the world that he had run into foolish, senseless dreams. Lionel looked into the titles of one or two of them, and saw that they were all rubbish. "An Inquiry into the powers of Flotation, addressed to my Lords of the Admiralty: inquiring as to whether or no my Lords are prepared to build a frigate—1st, which carries a scantling of six inches of iron, backed by eleven inches of teak or oak; 2nd, which is sufficiently short for naval manœuvring; 3rd, which possesses a speed of not under eleven knots. With other considerations, calling their Lordship's attention to the fact that there is nothing in the present state of science, to prevent their Lordship's, under

better advice, building a gun which will throw a rifled shot of 600 lbs. weight, and smash the whole of the above arrangement into the middle of next week." Lionel found such manuscripts as these, and remembered his father's admiration for Defoe's titles ; but he found no money.

Few people were ever harder put about than this poor Lionel. He had never asked for money, and never wanted for money, until now. Others began to ask him for money, the very neighbours who had been searching for his father's body. He had actually none. There was no discoverable property, except the books, and his own watch. His books were not convertible, but the watch was. He walked to Bangor, and sold the watch, leaving the books and manuscripts alone.

It became absolutely necessary that he should do something. The money he had raised on the watch was soon gone, with the exception of a very few pounds : absolute want was staring him in the face. His father's affairs did not seem to be in disorder ; his father seemed to have had no affairs whatever. He had no lawyer, no banker, and seemed to have no creditors. The man's affairs, such as they were, appeared to have come to an end with the man himself. Lionel knew absolutely nothing about them. He only knew this, that he, with an education, which in those times would have cost two thousand pounds or so, was in close and imminent danger of turning groom or working on the roads. He had not sufficient knowledge to take a place as under gardener ; and even if he applied for a groom's place, class prejudices would prevent his getting it. His father had made him a finished horseman on one of their tough Welsh ponies ; but who knew this, save himself ? and who was likely to take a highly-educated and very handsome young man for their groom without a character ?

With the grief and horror of his father's death still strongly on him, he found himself at the bottom of the well of despair, without one single friend in the world. He knew nobody, except Welsh lads below him in rank, whose language he could certainly speak, but which language his father had taught him to despise. His education had been scientifically military. There was the making of a great soldier about him, he knew that ; but how was he to become a soldier ?

" I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground ;
When the ranks are rolled in vapour, and the winds are layed in sound."

Sitting desperate and penniless before the desolate hearth, he sometimes thought, young, strong, clever as he was, that *that*

would be the best solution. And as the devil is always ready, the devil came to him ; and night after night he saw the recruiting sergeant rise out of the black ashes and stand with his gaudy ribands in his shako on the now desolate hearth.

But he said, sturdily, "No. God could not have meant that. If I enlist I can never get my commission."

But in spite of his saying, "Apaga, Satanas !" to the recruiting sergeant day by day, the devil in that singular form continued to tempt him. And then he began to say, "After all one gets a certain prestige ; one would soon be sergeant-major ; and at times they give commissions." So the recruiting sergeant grew more prominent day by day, until he looked upon enlisting—until he became a possibility, nay, a probability in the dark.

In daylight it was different. The sheeted mountain over his head would give up his father's corpse to rebuke and revile him if he ventured on such a sacrilege. *He* a common soldier ! He who could point out the weak points in the lines of Torres Vedras, to herd with ploughmen ! It was absolutely intolerable. But he had only four pounds in the world, and no friend.

Lord Overbury, now Lord Hawkestone—it flashed across him like lightning. He was all alone before the cold fireplace when he thought of it, and it was midnight, and the snow was falling fast, and was being hurled into deep drifts by the westerly wind. The thought of Lord Hawkestone was very sudden, but he saw in one second of time that it was his only hope. He opened the door and passed out, shutting it behind him ; and in the next instant was up to his waist in a snow-drift.

How one wonders at the fierce health of one's youth ! at the things one *used* to do ! To a middle-aged reader this frantic expedition of Lionel must appear almost incredible. Yet let that reader remember what things he could do, on river and alp, at eighteen. This young man, with his fancy strong upon him, amidst drifting snow, on a furious winter's night, crossed the half-frozen stream below Llyn y Dinas, climbed the hill beyond, passed through the labyrinth of the half-frozen little lakes, among which he had first met Lord Hawkestone, crossed the Shoulder of Cnicht in the darkness, and by nine o'clock in the morning was before the door of Lord Hawkestone's house, having had only two guides, and those phantoms, Lord Hawkestone, his friend, and the recruiting sergeant.

The old, well-studied English order was here still, although the soul which moved the machine was far away. A butler opened the door to him, and, wild as he looked, recognised him as his lord's friend. Lionel asked for Lord Hawkestone. Lord Hawke-

stone was, the butler said, at Southampton, helping to see his regiment aboard for India. "It was a strange resolution," said the butler, "for his lordship, with his great wealth, to stick to the army; but his lordship *was* strange. Perfectly mad about the dratted soldiering," said the old man. "But, however, there it was. Lords must do as they chose, and the ship sailed from Southampton to-morrow, at latest."

Despair upon despair. Lionel saw in one instant that unless he *acted* this man would be lost to him, and that he was the only person who stood between him and the recruiting sergeant. He left the butler at the door, and started madly for Southampton.

When a man is in utter despair it is difficult for him to do anything foolish. When a man has got so low as Lionel Blackeston, it seems utterly impossible for him to get any lower. Yet it was quite possible. I have seen high-spirited men in Australia brought lower than you would fancy; but there is a certain kind of man whom you cannot beat. Lionel Blackeston was one. He got on his fantastic journey as far as Shrewsbury, when his shoes were gone, and his money well-nigh spent. He saw now that he was desperate, and that it was all over with him, and he turned—turned back to utter desperation.

Why did he turn back? Was it because his shoes were gone and his money spent? Was it because he went into a tavern, and the recruiting sergeant followed him, and tempted him? Not at all. It was because he read the newspaper while the sergeant was talking to him; saw that he was ruined; and so quietly said to himself, like a true general—"I am now entirely desperate, and consequently not in a fit state to judge of my own affairs. I shall go back into contemplation." To the sergeant he said—"There is news here which concerns me, and prevents my enlisting. You need not kick my dog"—for the sergeant had done so in his anger at losing such a splendid recruit.

The paragraph in the newspaper which turned him back home was this:—

"SOUTHAMPTON.—The *Orontes*, for India, sailed yesterday, carrying the first company of the second battalion of the Welsh Fusiliers, under command of Captain the Earl of Hawkestone. She passed the Needles at 1 p.m., and was spoken off Portland by pilot-boat No. 65, at 6 p.m. Wind fresh, from the east."

Lord Hawkestone, his only hope, was bowling down Channel

before the easterly wind. Now it came to be a question between working on the roads and enlisting. It required, he thought, a little consideration; and there were his father's books, and his father's swords, and what not, which would bring money, if he could only get them to market, and so avoid the evil day.

But there was no chance of getting them to market at all. He had no money. His father's books—a splendid collection—would have to be sold in London. They were worth money, but were not worth twopence apiece in Wales; and he had absolutely no money whatever.

The snow was deep on the morning he got home. He got the key of his house from the old Welshwoman at the chapel, who had so long acted as his father's housekeeper. He had a few shillings left, and as there was no shop nearer than Bethgelert, he got her, in defiance of the excise duty, to sell him some oatmeal. She let him have it unwillingly, and he thought that she was ungrateful.

With this he made porridge, and ate it all up himself. When he had satisfied his own hunger he noticed that his dog was whining for some, and he had none to give the poor brute, who had followed him so faithfully and so trustingly, but had eaten it all himself. So he had got as low as this, that he could not feed his own dog!

This was the very worst thing of all. It would have driven one sort of high-spirited man into furious imprecation; another sort of high-spirited man into tears. In the case of Lionel Blackeston it did neither: it set his brain to work to see how he was to get himself out of his position. He felt as much for his dumb, starving dog as the most *outré* of sentimentalist; but the man was a born general, and utilised his very sentimentalism. He said, "This won't do. If a man has got so low as to eat his dog's share of the dinner, it won't do, and must be mended. I will get over to Carnarvon to-morrow and enlist."

All his dreams of rising in the world were gone hopelessly now. He gave it all up; he would be a common soldier, and herd with the vanmen and ploughboys. All done. A life ended at nineteen. He lit some fire again, and sat pondering over it; and in the warmth of the fire, the dog forgot his hunger and left whining.

But only for a time—for a very short time. Soon after he had left whining, he began to growl—but feebly, and with very little energy.

Lionel said once or twice, "Lie down, Rover, my poor dog; lie

down." But the dog still growled, though he wagged his tail the while.

Lionel had left noticing him for a very short time, thinking only that the dog heard a prowling fox, when he growled louder, just turning himself towards the door. The door was opened suddenly, and a clear, sharp voice said, "Heavens, Blackeston! what on earth is all this?"

Lionel turned and saw Lord Hawkestone before him. *Then* he broke down utterly. He had not the slightest business to do anything of the kind; but he did it notwithstanding. He had stood ill-fortune well enough; but this wonderful piece of providence sent him a little off his balance.

When he got his voice he said, "I thought you were half way to India."

"My company is," said Lord Hawkestone. "*I* am going overland, with this splendid Waghorn, and shall be there long before them. He has particularly asked me, in my capacity as Earl, to do so, and give the new route a prestige. I am, of course, delighted. But about yourself. You are rather a solemn subject with me. I fell in love with you the very first time I saw you, and I am sure I would do anything in the world to serve you. But my poor father left you as a sort of legacy to me, saying that he had ruined your father unintentionally, and that it was left to me to make amends. I cannot venture to offer money directly to a gentleman like you; but I think there is no harm in this arrangement: Will you mortgage your father's books to me for the price of your commission?"

Why go on? Is not the story told! Do you want to know the future of Lionel Blackeston before he developed into General Blackeston? Ask the Affghans; ask the Sikhs; ask the glorious Russians who came swarming up the hillside at Inkermann; ask the rebel Sepoys; nay, ask the House of Commons, to whom they appeal in case of difficulty, when there is no question of party. Their answer will be "Blackeston."

The ladies want to know what became of the dog. I don't know what became of the dog. I suppose that he died.

THE END.

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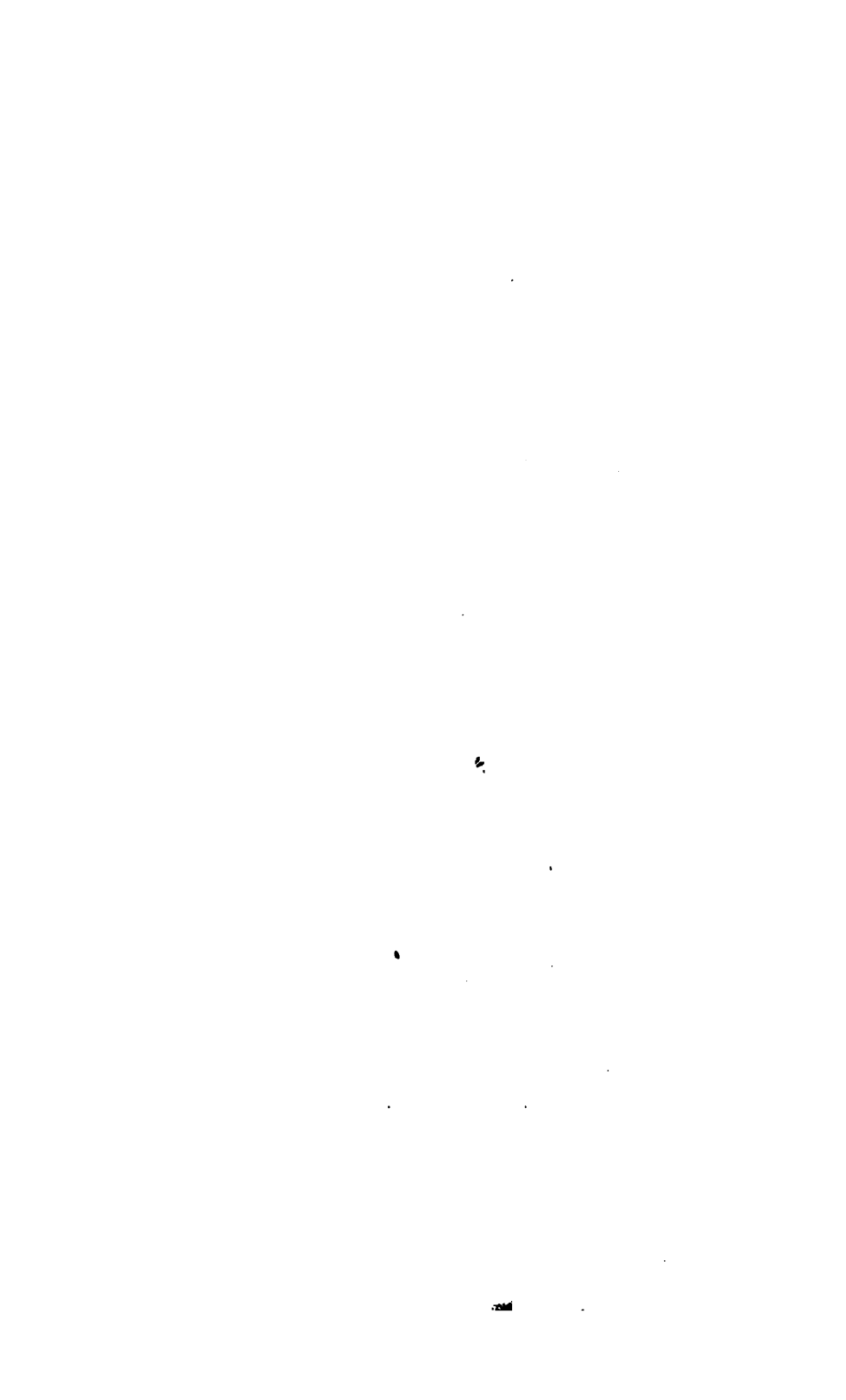
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